

# THE PANOPLIST;

OR,

## THE CHRISTIAN'S ARMORY.

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### Biography.

#### LIFE OF THE REV. WILLIAM TENNENT.

(Continued from p. 6.)

THE writer of these memoirs was greatly interested by these uncommon events; and, on a favourable occasion, earnestly pressed Mr. Tennent for a minute account of what his views and apprehensions were, while he lay in this extraordinary state of suspended animation. He discovered great reluctance to enter into any explanation of his perceptions and feelings at this time; but, being importunately urged to do it, he at length consented, and proceeded with a solemnity not to be described.

"While I was conversing with my brother," said he, "on the state of my soul, and the fears I had entertained for my future welfare, I found myself, in an instant, in another state of existence, under the direction of a superior being, who ordered me to follow him. I was accordingly wafted along, I know not how, till I beheld at a distance an ineffable glory, the impression of which on my mind it is impossible to communicate to mortal

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man. I immediately reflected on my happy change, and thought, Well, blessed be God! I am safe at last, notwithstanding all my fears. I saw an innumerable host of happy beings, surrounding the inexpressible glory, in acts of adoration and joyous worship; but I did not see any bodily shape or representation in the glorious appearance. I heard things unutterable. I heard their songs and hallelujahs, of thanksgiving and praise, with unspeakable rapture. I felt joy unutterable and full of glory. I then applied to my conductor, and requested leave to join the happy throng. On which he tapped me on the shoulder, and said, 'You must return to the earth.' This seemed like a sword thro' my heart. In an instant I recollect to have seen my brother standing before me, disputing with the doctor. The three days, during which I had appeared lifeless, seemed to me not more than ten or twenty minutes. The idea of returning to

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this world of sorrow and trouble, gave me such a shock, that I fainted repeatedly." He added, "Such was the effect on my mind of what I had seen and heard, that if it be possible for a human being to live entirely above the world and the things of it, for some time afterwards I was that person. The ravishing sounds of the songs and hallelujahs that I heard, and the very words that were uttered, were not out of my ears, when awake, for at least three years. All the kingdoms of the earth were in my sight as nothing and vanity; and so great were my ideas of heavenly glory, that nothing, which did not, in some measure, relate to it, could command my serious attention."\*

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\* The author has been particularly solicitous to obtain every confirmation of this extraordinary event in the life of Mr. Tennent. He, accordingly, wrote to every person he could think of, likely to have conversed with Mr. T. on the subject. He received several answers; but the following letter from the worthy successor of Mr. T. in the pastoral charge of his church, will answer for the author's purpose.

"Monmouth, N. J. December 10, 1805.

"DEAR SIR,

"Agreeably to your request, I now send you in writing the remarkable account, which I sometime since gave you verbally, respecting your good friend, my worthy predecessor, the late Rev. William Tennent, of this place. In a very free and feeling conversation on religion, and on the future rest and blessedness of the people of God, (while travelling together from Monmouth to Princeton) I mentioned to Mr. Tennent that I should be highly gratified in hearing, from his own mouth, an account of the *trance* which he was said to have been in, unless the relation would be disagreeable to himself. After a short silence, he proceeded, saying, that he had been

It is not surprising, that after so affecting an account, strong solicitude should have been felt

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sick with a fever; that the fever increased, and he by degrees sunk under it. After some time (as his friends informed him) he died, or appeared to die, in the same manner as persons usually do; that in laying him out, one happened to draw his hand under the left arm, and perceived a small tremour in the flesh; that he was laid out, and was cold and stiff. The time for his funeral was appointed and the people collected; but a young doctor, his particular friend, pleaded with great earnestness that he might not then be buried, as the tremour under the arm continued; that his brother, Gilbert, became impatient with the young gentleman, and said to him, '*What! a man not dead who is cold and stiff as a stake?*' The importunate young friend, however, prevailed; another day was appointed for the burial, and the people separated. During this interval many means were made use of to discover, if possible, some symptoms of life, but none appeared excepting the tremour. The doctor never left him for three nights and three days. The people again met to bury him, but could not even then obtain the consent of his friend, who pleaded for one hour more; and when that was gone, he pleaded for half an hour, and then for a quarter of an hour; when, just at the end of this period, on which hung his last hope, Mr. Tennent opened his eyes. They then pried open his mouth, which was stiff, so as to get a quill into it, through which some liquid was conveyed into the stomach, and he by degrees recovered.

"This account, as intimated before, Mr. Tennent said he had received from his friends. I said to him, 'Sir, you seem to be one indeed raised from the dead, and may tell us what it is to die, and what you were sensible of while in that state.' He replied in the following words: '*As to dying—I found my fever increase, and I became weaker and weaker, until, all at once, I found myself in heaven, as I thought. I saw no shape as to the Deity, but glory all un-*



for further information as to the words, or at least the subjects of praise and adoration, which Mr.

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utterable?" Here he paused, as tho' unable to find words to express his views, let his bridle fall, and lifting up his hands, proceeded, 'I can say, as St. Paul did, I heard and I saw things all unutterable! I saw a great multitude before this glory, apparently in the height of bliss, singing most melodiously. I was transported with my own situation, viewing all my troubles ended, and my rest and glory begun, and was about to join the great and happy multitude, when one came to me, looked me full in the face, laid his hand upon my shoulder, and said, 'You must go back.' These words went through me; nothing could have shocked me more; I cried out, Lord, must I go back! With this shock I opened my eyes in this world. When I saw I was in the world, I fainted, then came to, and fainted for several times, as one probably would naturally have done in so weak a situation.'

"Mr. Tennent further informed me, that he had so entirely lost the recollection of his past life, and the benefit of his former studies, that he could neither understand what was spoken to him, nor write, nor read his own name. That he had to begin all anew, and did not recollect that he had ever read before, until he had again learned his letters, and was able to pronounce the monosyllables, such as *thee* and *thou*. But, that as his strength returned, which was very slowly, his memory also returned. Yet, notwithstanding the extreme feebleness of his situation, his recollection of what he saw and heard while in heaven, as he supposed, and the sense of divine things, which he there obtained, continued all the time in their full strength, so that he was continually in something like an ecstasy of mind. 'And,' said he, 'for three years the sense of divine things continued so great, and every thing else appeared so completely vain, when compared to heaven, that could I have had the world for stooping down for it, I believe I should not have thought of doing it.'"

Tennent had heard. But when he was requested to communicate these, he gave a decided negative, adding, "You will know them, with many other particulars hereafter, as you will find the whole among my papers;" alluding to his intention of leaving the writer hereof his executor, which precluded any further solicitation.\*

The pious and candid reader is left to his own reflections on this very extraordinary occurrence. The facts have been stated, and they are unquestionable. The writer will only ask, whether it be contrary to revealed truth, or to reason, to believe, that in every age of the world instances like that which is here recorded, have occurred, to furnish *living testimony* of the reality of the invisible world, and of the infinite importance of eternal concerns?

As soon as circumstances would permit, Mr. Tennent was licensed, and began to preach the everlasting gospel with great

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\* It was so ordered, in the course of Divine Providence, that the writer was sorely disappointed in his expectation of obtaining the papers here alluded to. Such, however, was the will of Heaven! Mr. Tennent's death happened during the revolutionary war, when the enemy separated the writer from him, so as to render it impracticable to attend him on a dying bed; and before it was possible to get to his house after his death, (the writer being with the American army at the Valley-Forge) his son came from Charleston, and took his mother, and his father's papers and property, and returned to Carolina. About 50 miles from Charleston, the son was suddenly taken sick, and died among entire strangers; and never since, though the writer was also left executor to the son, could any trace of the father's papers be discovered by him.

zeal and success. The death of his brother John,† who had been some time settled as minister of the Presbyterian church at Freehold, in the county of Monmouth, New-Jersey, left that congregation in a destitute state. They had experienced so much spiritual benefit from the indefatigable labours, and pious zeal of this able minister of Jesus Christ, that they soon turned their attention to his brother, who was received on trial, and after one year, was found to be no unworthy successor to so excellent a predecessor. In October, 1733, Mr. Tennent was regularly ordained their pastor, and continued so through the whole of a pretty long life; one of the best proofs of ministerial fidelity.

Although his salary was small, (it is thought under 100*l*.) yet the glebe belonging to the church was an excellent plantation, on which he lived, and which, with care and good farming, was capable of maintaining a family with comfort. But his inattention to the things of this world was so great, that he left the management of his temporal concerns wholly to a faithful servant, in whom he placed great

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† The following entry in the records of the church at Freehold, shows the opinion of that church with regard to Mr. John Tennent's usefulness.

"Lord's day, April 23d, 1732. The Reverend and dear Mr. John Tennent departed this life between eight and nine o'clock this morning. A mournful providence, and cause of great humiliation to this poor congregation, to be bereaved in the flower of youth, of the most laborious, successful, well qualified, pious pastor this age afforded, though but a youth of 25 years, 5 months and 11 days of age."

confidence. After a short time he found his worldly affairs were becoming embarrassed. His steward reported to him that he was in debt to the merchant between 20*l*. and 30*l*. and he knew of no means of payment, as the crops had fallen short. Mr. Tennent mentioned this to an intimate friend, a merchant of New-York, who was on a visit at his house. His friend told him, that this mode of life would not do, that he must get a wife, to attend to his temporal affairs, and to comfort his leisure hours by conjugal endearments. He smiled at the idea, and assured him, it never could be the case, unless some friend would provide one for him, for he knew not how to go about it. His friend told him he was ready to undertake the business; that he had a sister-in-law, an excellent woman, of great piety, a widow, of his own age, and one peculiarly suited in all respects to his character and circumstances. In short, that she was every thing he ought to look for; and if he would go with him to New-York the next day, he would settle the negotiation for him. To this he soon assented. The next evening found him in that city, and before noon, the day after, he was introduced to Mrs. Noble. He was much pleased with her appearance; and, when left alone with her, abruptly told her, that he supposed her brother had informed her of his errand; that neither his time nor inclination would suffer him to use much ceremony; but that if she approved the measure he would attend his charge on the next sabbath, and return on Monday, be married and immediately take her home.



The lady, with some hesitation and difficulty, at last consented, being convinced that his situation and circumstances rendered it proper. Thus, in one week, she found herself mistress of his house. She proved a most invaluable treasure to him, more than answering every thing said of her by an affectionate brother. She took the care of his temporal concerns upon her, extricated him from debt, and, by a happy union of prudence and economy, so managed all his worldly business, that in a few years his circumstances became easy and comfortable. In a word, in her was literally fulfilled the declaration of Solomon, that "a virtuous woman is a crown to her husband, and that her price is far above rubies." Besides several children who died in infancy, he had by her three sons, who attained the age of manhood; John, who studied physic, and died in the West-Indies when about thirty three years of age; William, a man of superior character, and minister of the Independent church in Charleston, South-Carolina, who died the latter end of September or beginning of October, A. D. 1777, about thirty-seven years old; and Gilbert, who also practised physic, and died at Freehold before his father, aged twenty-eight years. Few parents could boast three sons of a more manly or handsome appearance; and the father gave them the most liberal education that the country could afford.

Mr. Tennent's inattention to earthly things continued till his eldest son was about three years old, when he led him out into the fields on a Lord's day after

public worship. The design of the walk was for religious meditation. As he went along, accidentally casting his eye on the child, a thought suddenly struck him, and he asked himself this question: "Should God in his providence take me hence, what would become of this child and its mother, for whom I have never taken any personal care to make provision? How can I answer this negligence to God and to them?" The impropriety of his inattention to the relative duties of life, which God had called him to; and the consideration of the sacred declaration, "that he who does not provide for his own household, has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel," had such an impressive effect on his mind, that it almost deprived him of his senses. He saw his conduct, which before he thought arose entirely from a deep sense of divine things, in a point of light in which he never before had viewed it. He immediately attempted to return home, but so great was his distress, that it was with difficulty he could get along; till, all at once, he was relieved by as suddenly recurring to that text of Scripture, which came into his mind with extraordinary force, "But unto the tribe of Levi Moses gave not any inheritance, the Lord God of Israel was their inheritance." Such, however, was the effect of this unexpected scene on Mr. Tennent's mind and judgment, that ever afterwards he prudently attended to the temporal business of life, still, however, in perfect subordination to the great things of eternity, and became fully convinced that God was to be faithfully

served, as well by discharging relative duties in his love and fear, as by the more immediate acts of devotion. He clearly perceived, that every duty had its proper time and place, as well as motive ; that we had a right, and were called of God, to eat and drink, and to be properly clothed ; and of course that care should be taken to procure those things, provided that all be done to the glory of God. In the duties of a gospel minister, however, especially as they related to his pastoral charge, he still engaged with the utmost zeal and faithfulness ; and was esteemed by all ranks and degrees, as far as his labours extended, as a fervent, useful, and successful preacher of the gospel.

His judgment of mankind was such, as to give him a marked superiority, in this respect, over his contemporaries, and greatly aided him in his ministerial functions. He was scarcely ever mistaken in the character of a man with whom he conversed, though it was but for a few hours. He had an independent mind, which was seldom satisfied on important subjects without the best evidence that was to be had. His manner was remarkably impressive ; and his sermons, although seldom polished, were generally delivered with such indescribable power, that he was truly an able and successful minister of the New Testament. He could say things from the pulpit, which, if said by almost any other man, would have been thought a violation of propriety. But by him they were delivered in a manner so peculiar to himself, and so extremely impressive, that they seldom failed to

please and to instruct. As an instance of this, the following anecdote is given, of the truth of which the writer was a witness.

Mr. Tennent was passing through a town in the state of New Jersey, in which he was a stranger, and had never preached, and stopping at a friend's house to dine, was informed, that it was a day of fasting and prayer in the congregation, on account of a very remarkable and severe drought, which threatened the most dangerous consequences to the fruits of the earth. His friend had just returned from church, and the intermission was but half an hour. Mr. Tennent was requested to preach, and with great difficulty consented, as he wished to proceed on his journey. At church the people were surprised to see a preacher, wholly unknown to them, and entirely unexpected, ascend the pulpit. His whole appearance, being in a travelling dress, covered with dust, wearing an old-fashioned large wig, discoloured like his clothes, and a long meagre visage, engaged their attention, and excited their curiosity. On his rising up, instead of beginning to pray, as was the usual practice, he looked around the congregation, with a piercing eye and earnest attention, and after a minute's profound silence, he addressed them with great solemnity in the following words: "My beloved brethren ! I am told you have come here to-day to fast and pray ; a very good work indeed, provided you have come with a sincere desire to glorify God thereby. But if your design is merely to comply with a customary practice, or with the wish of your church of-



ficers, you are guilty of the greatest folly imaginable, as you had much better have staid at home, and earned your three shillings and six pence.\* But if your minds are indeed impressed with the solemnity of the occasion, and you are really desirous of humbling yourselves before Almighty God, your heavenly Father, come, join with me, and let us pray." This had an effect so uncommon and extraordinary on the congregation, that the utmost seriousness was universally manifested. The prayer and the sermon added greatly to the impressions already made, and tended to rouse the attention, influence the mind, command the affections, and increase the temper, which had been so happily produced. Many had reason to bless God for this unexpected visit, and to reckon this day one of the happiest of their lives.†

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\* At that time, the stated price for a day's labour.

† The writer, having requested of the present Rev. Dr. William M. Tennent a written account of an anecdote relative to his uncle, which he had once heard him repeat verbally, received in reply the following letter:

"Abington, Jan. 11th, 1806.

"SIR,

"The anecdote of my venerable relative, the Rev. William Tennent, of Freehold, which you wished me to send to you, is as follows:

"During the great revival of religion, which took place under the ministry of Mr. Whitefield, and others distinguished for their piety and zeal at that period, Mr. Tennent was laboriously active, and much engaged to help forward the work; in the performance of which he met with strong and powerful temptations. The following is related, as received, in substance, from his own lips, and may be

While on this subject, we may introduce another anecdote of this wonderful man, to show the

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considered as extraordinary and singularly striking.

"On the evening preceding public worship, which was to be attended the next day, he selected a subject for the discourse which was to be delivered, and made some progress in his preparations. In the morning, he resumed the same subject, with an intention to extend his thoughts further on it, but was presently assaulted with a temptation that the Bible, which he then held in his hand, was not of divine authority, but the invention of man. He instantly endeavoured to repel the temptation by prayer, but his endeavours proved unavailing. The temptation continued, and fastened upon him with greater strength, as the time advanced for public service. He lost all the thoughts, which he had on his subject the preceding evening. He tried other subjects, but could get nothing for the people. The whole book of God, under that distressing state of mind, was a sealed book to him; and to add to his affliction, he was, to use his own words, "*shut up in prayer.*" A cloud, dark as that of Egypt, oppressed his mind.

"Thus agonized in spirit, he proceeded to the church, where he found a large congregation assembled, and waiting to hear the word: and then it was, he observed, that he was more deeply distressed than ever, and especially for the dishonour, which he feared would fall upon religion, through him, that day. He resolved, however, to attempt the service. He introduced it by singing a psalm, during which time his agitations were increased to the highest degree. When the moment for prayer commenced, he arose, as one in the most perilous and painful situation, and with arms extended to the heavens, began with this outcry, "*Lord, have mercy upon me!*" Upon the utterance of this petition he was heard; the thick cloud instantly broke away, and an unspeakably joyful light shone in upon his soul, so that his spirit seemed to be caught up to the

dealings of God with him, and the deep contemplations of his mind. He was attending the duties of the Lord's day in his own congregation as usual, where the custom was to have morning and evening service with only a half hour's intermission to relieve the attention. He had preached in the morning, and in the intermission had walked into the woods for meditation, the weather being warm. He was reflecting on the infinite wisdom of God, as manifested in all his works, and particularly in the wonderful method of salvation, through the death and sufferings of his beloved Son. This subject suddenly opened on his mind with such a flood of light, that his views of the glory, and the infinite majesty of Jehovah, were so inexpressibly great, as entirely to overwhelm him, and he fell, almost lifeless, to the ground. When he had revived a little, all he could do was to raise a fervent prayer, that God would withdraw himself from

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heavens, and he felt as though he saw God, as Moses did on the mount, face to face, and was carried forth to him, with an enlargement greater than he had ever before experienced, and on every page of the Scriptures saw his divinity inscribed in brightest colours. The result was a deep solemnity on the face of the whole congregation, and the house at the end of the prayer was a *Bochim*. He gave them the subject of his evening meditations, which was brought to his full remembrance, with an overflowing abundance of other weighty and solemn matter. The Lord blessed the discourse, so that it proved the happy means of the conversion of about thirty persons. This day he spoke of, ever afterwards, as his harvest day.

"I am yours with esteem,

"WILLIAM M. TENNENT."

him, or that he must perish under a view of his ineffable glory. When able to reflect on his situation, he could not but abhor himself as a weak and despicable worm, and seemed to be overcome with astonishment, that a creature so unworthy and insufficient, had ever dared to attempt the instruction of his fellow-men in the nature and attributes of so glorious a Being. Overstaying his usual time, some of his elders went in search of him, and found him prostrate on the ground, unable to rise, and incapable of informing them of the cause. They raised him up, and after some time brought him to the church, and supported him to the pulpit, which he ascended on his hands and knees, to the no small astonishment of the congregation. He remained silent a considerable time, earnestly supplicating Almighty God (as he told the writer) to hide himself from him, that he might be enabled to address his people, who were by this time lost in wonder to know what had produced this uncommon event. His prayers were heard, and he became able to stand up, by holding the desk. He now began the most affecting and pathetic address, that the congregation had ever received from him. He gave a surprising account of the views he had, of the infinite wisdom of God, and greatly deplored his own incapacity to speak to them concerning a being so infinitely glorious beyond all his powers of description. He attempted to show something of what had been discovered to him of the astonishing wisdom of Jehovah, of which it was impossible for human nature to form



adequate conceptions. He then broke out into so fervent and expressive a prayer, as greatly to surprise the congregation, and draw tears from every eye. A sermon followed, that continued the solemn scene, and made very lasting impressions on all the hearers.

The great increase of communicants in his church was a good evidence of his pastoral care and powerful preaching, as it exceeded that of most churches in the synod. But his labours were not confined to the pulpit. He was indefatigable in his endeavours to communicate in private families a savour of the knowledge of spiritual and divine things. In his parochial visits he used regularly to go through his congregation in order, so as to carry the unsearchable riches of Christ to every house. He earnestly pressed it on the conscience of parents to instruct their children at home by plain and easy questions, so as gradually to expand their young minds, and prepare them for the reception of the more practical doctrines of the gospel. In this, Mr. Tennent has presented an excellent example to his brethren in the ministry; for certain it is, that more good may be done in a congregation, by this domestic mode of instruction, than any one can imagine, who has not made the trial. Children and servants are in this way prepared for the teachings of the sanctuary, and to reap the full benefit of the word publicly preached. He made it a practice in all these visits to enforce practical religion on all, high and low, rich and poor, young and old, master and servant. To this he was

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particularly attentive, it being a favourite observation with him, "that he loved a religion that a man could live by."

Mr. Tennent carefully avoided the discussion of controversial subjects, unless specially called to it by particular circumstances, and then he was ever ready to assign the reason of his faith. The following occurrence will show the general state of his mind and feelings in regard to such subjects. A couple of young clergymen, visiting at his house, entered into a dispute on the question, at that time much controverted in New England, whether faith or repentance were first in order, in the conversion of a sinner. Not being able to determine the point, they agreed to make Mr. Tennent their umpire, and to dispute the subject at length before him. He accepted the proposal, and after a solemn debate for some time, his opinion being asked, he very gravely took his pipe from his mouth, looked out of his window, pointed to a man ploughing on a hill at some distance, and asked the young clergymen if they knew that man: on their answering in the negative, he told them it was one of his elders, who, to his full conviction, had been a sincere Christian for more than thirty years. "Now," said Mr. Tennent, "ask him, whether faith or repentance came first, what do you think he would say?" They said they could not tell. "Then," says he, "I will tell you: he would say that he cared not, which came first, but that he had got them both. Now, my friends," he added, "be careful that you have both a true faith, and a sincere repentance,

and do not be greatly troubled, which comes first." It is not, however, to be supposed by this, that Mr. Tennent was unfriendly to a deep and accurate examination of all important theological doctrines. There were few men more earnest than he to have young clergymen well instructed and thoroughly furnished for their work. This indeed was an object on which his heart was much set, and which he exerted himself greatly to promote.

Mr. Tennent was remarkably distinguished for a pointed attention to the particular circumstances and situation of the afflicted, either in body or mind, and would visit them with as much care and attention as a physician, and frequently indeed proved an able one, to both soul and body. But his greatest talent was that of a peace-maker, which he possessed in so eminent a degree, that probably none have exceeded, and very few have equalled him in it. He was sent for, far and near, to settle disputes, and heal difficulties, which arose in congregations; and, happily for those concerned, he was generally successful. Indeed, he seldom would relinquish his object till he had accomplished it.

But while this man of God was thus successful in promoting the best interests of his fellow-creatures, and in advancing the glory of his Lord and Master, the great enemy of mankind was not likely to observe the destruction of his kingdom without making an effort to prevent it. As he assailed our blessed Saviour in the days of his flesh with all his art and all his power, so has he

always made the faithful followers of the Redeemer the objects of his inveterate malice. If the good man, of whom we write, was greatly honoured by peculiar communications from on high, he was also very often the subject of the severe buffetings of that malignant and fallen spirit.

The time of which we are now speaking was remarkable for a great revival of religion,\* in which Mr. Tennent was considerably instrumental, and in which a Mr. David Rowland, brought up with Mr. Tennent at the Log-College, was also very remarkable for his successful preaching among all ranks of people. Possessing a commanding eloquence, as well as other estimable qualities, he became very popular, and was much celebrated throughout the country. His celebrity and success were subjects of very serious regret to many careless worldlings, who placed all their happiness in the enjoyment of temporal objects, and considered, and represented Mr. Rowland and his brethren as fanatics and hypocrites. This was specially applicable to many of the great men of the then province of New Jersey, and particularly to the chief justice, who was well known for his disbelief of Revelation. There was at this time, prowling through the country, a noted man by the name of Tom Bell, whose knowledge and understanding were very considerable, and who greatly excelled in low art and cunning. His mind was totally debased, and his whole conduct betrayed a soul capable of de-

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\* It was not far from A. D. 1744.



ascending to every species of iniquity. In all the arts of theft, robbery, fraud, deception, and defamation, he was so deeply skilled, and so thoroughly practised, that it is believed, he never had his equal in this country. He had been indicted in almost every one of the middle colonies; but his ingenuity and cunning always enabled him to escape punishment. This man unhappily resembled Mr. Rowland in his external appearance, so as hardly to be known from him, without the most careful examination.

It so happened, that Tom Bell arrived one evening, at a tavern, in Princeton, dressed in a dark, parson's gray frock. On his entering the tavern about dusk, the late John Stockton, Esq. of that town, a pious and respectable man, to whom Mr. Rowland was well known, went up to Bell, and addressed him as Mr. Rowland, and was inviting him to go home with him. Bell assured him of his mistake. It was with some difficulty that Mr. Stockton acknowledged his error, and then informed Bell, that it had arisen from his great resemblance to Mr. Rowland. This hint was sufficient for the prolific genius of that notorious impostor. The next day, Bell went into the county of Hunterdon, and stopped in a congregation where Mr. Rowland had formerly preached once or twice, but where he was not intimately known. Here he met with a member of the congregation, to whom he introduced himself as the Rev. Mr. Rowland, who had preached to them some time before. This gentleman immediately invited him to his house, to

spend the week; and begged him, as the people were without a minister, to preach for them on the next Sabbath, to which Bell agreed, and notice was accordingly given to the neighbourhood. The impostor was treated with every mark of attention and respect; and a private room was assigned to him, as a study, to prepare for the Sabbath. The sacred day arrived, and he was invited to ride to church with the ladies in the family waggon, and the master of the house accompanied them on an elegant horse. When they had arrived near the church, Bell on a sudden discovered, that he had left his notes in his study, and proposed to ride back for them on the fine horse, by which means he should be able to return in time for the service. This proposal was instantly agreed to, and Bell mounted the horse, returned to the house, rifled the desk of his host, and made off with the horse. Wherever he stopped, he called himself the Rev. David Rowland.

At the time this event took place, Messrs. Tennent and Rowland had gone into Pennsylvania or Maryland, with Mr. Joshua Anderson and Mr. Benjamin Stevens, (both members of a church contiguous to that where Bell had practised his fraud) on business of a religious nature. Soon after their return, Mr. Rowland was charged with the above robbery; he gave bonds to appear at the court at Trenton, and the affair made a great noise throughout the colony. At the court of oyer and terminer, the judge charged the grand jury on the subject with great severity. After long consideration, the jury returned into court without

finding a bill. The judge reproved them, in an angry manner, and ordered them out again. They again returned without finding a bill, and were again sent out with threatenings of severe punishment if they persisted in their refusal. At last they agreed, and brought in a bill for the alleged crime. On the trial, Messrs. Tennent, Anderson, and Stevens appeared as witnesses, and fully proved an *alibi* in favour of Mr. Rowland, by swearing, that on the very day on which the robbery was committed, they were with Mr. Rowland, and heard him preach, in Pennsylvania or Maryland. The jury, accordingly, acquitted him without hesitation, to the great disappointment and mortification of his prosecutors, and of many other enemies to the great revival of religion that had recently taken place; but to the great joy of the serious and well disposed.

The spirits hostile to the spread of the gospel were not, however, so easily overcome. In their view, an opportunity was now presented, favourable for inflicting a deep wound on the cause of Christianity; and, as if urged on by the malice of man's great enemy, they resolved that no means should be left untried, no arts unemployed, for the destruction of these distinguished servants of God. Many and various were the circumstances which still contributed to inspire them with hopes of success. The testimony of the person who had been robbed was positive that Mr. Rowland was the robber; and this testimony was corroborated by that of a number of individuals, who had

seen Tom Bell personating Mr. Rowland, using his name, and in possession of the horse. These sons of Belial had been able, after great industry used for the purpose, to collect a mass of evidence of this kind, which they considered as establishing the fact; but Mr. Rowland was now out of their power by the verdict of *not guilty*. Their vengeance, therefore, was directed against the witnesses, by whose testimony he had been cleared; and, they were accordingly arraigned for perjury before a court of quarter sessions in the county; and the grand jury received a strict charge, the plain import of which was, that these good men ought to be indicted. After an examination of the testimony on one side only, as is the custom in such cases, the grand jury did accordingly find bills of indictment against Messrs. Tennent, Anderson and Stevens, for wilful and corrupt perjury. Their enemies, and the enemies of the gospel, now began to triumph. They gloried in the belief, that an indelible stain would be fixed on the professors of religion, and of consequence on religion itself; and that this *new light*, by which they denominated all appearance of piety, would soon be extinguished forever.

These indictments were removed to the supreme court; and poor Mr. Anderson, living in the county, and conscious of his entire innocence, could not brook the idea of lying under the odium of the hateful crime of perjury, and demanded a trial at the first court of oyer and terminer. This proved most seriously injurious to him, for he was pronounced guilty, and most



cruelly and unjustly condemned to stand one hour on the court house steps, with a paper on his breast, whereon was written, in large letters, "This is for wilful and corrupt perjury;" which sentence was executed upon him.

Messrs. Tennent and Stevens were summoned to appear at the next court; and attended accordingly, depending on the aid of Mr. John Coxe, an eminent lawyer, who had been previously employed to conduct their defence. As Mr. Tennent was wholly unacquainted with the nature of forensic litigation, and did not know of any person living who could prove his innocence, (all the persons who were with him being indicted) his only resource and consolation was to commit himself to the Divine will, and if he must suffer, to take it as from the hand of God, who, he well knew, could make even the wrath of man to praise him;\* and considering it as probable that he might suffer, he had prepared a sermon to be preached from the pillory, if that should be his fate. On his arrival at Trenton, he found the famous Mr. Smith of New York, father of the late chief justice of Canada, one of the ablest lawyers in America, and of a religious character, who had voluntarily attended to aid in his defence; also his brother Gilbert, who was now settled in the pastoral charge of the second Presbyterian church in Philadelphia, and who had brought Mr. John Kinsey, one of the first counsellors of that city, for the same purpose.

\* His affectionate congregation felt deeply interested in his critical situation, and kept a day of fasting and prayer on the occasion.

Messrs. Tennent and Stevens met these gentlemen at Mr. Coxe's the morning before the trial was to come on. Mr. Coxe requested that they would bring in their witnesses, that they might examine them previously to their going into court. Mr. Tennent answered, that he did not know of any witnesses but God and his own conscience. Mr. Coxe replied, "If you have no witnesses, Sir, the trial must be put off; otherwise you most certainly will be convicted. You well know the strong testimony that will be brought against you, and the exertions that are making to accomplish your ruin." Mr. Tennent replied, "I am sensible of all this, yet it never shall be said that I have delayed the trial, or been afraid to meet the justice of my country. I know my own innocence, and that God, whose I am, and whom I serve, will never suffer me to fall by these snares of the devil, or by the wicked machinations of his agents or servants. Therefore, gentlemen, go on to the trial." Messrs. Smith and Kinsey, who were both religious men, told him that his confidence and trust in God as a Christian minister of the gospel, was well founded, and before a heavenly tribunal would be all-important to him; but assured him it would not avail in an earthly court, and urged his consent to put off the trial. Mr. Tennent continued inflexible in his refusal; on which Mr. Coxe told him that, since he was determined to go to trial, he had the satisfaction of informing him, that they had discovered a flaw in the indictment, which might prove favourable to him on a demurrer. He asked for an ex-

planation, and on finding that it was to admit the fact in a legal point of view, and rest on the law arising from it, Mr. Tennent broke out with great vehemence, saying, that this was another snare of the devil, and before he would consent to it he would suffer death. He assured his counsel, that his confidence in God was so strong, and his assurance that he would bring about his deliverance in some way or other, was so great, that he did not wish them to delay the trial for a moment.

Mr. Stevens, whose faith was not of this description, and who was bowed down to the ground under the most gloomy apprehensions of suffering, as his neighbour Mr. Anderson had done, eagerly seized the opportunity of escape that was offered, and was afterwards discharged on the exception.

Mr. Coxe still urged putting off the trial, charging Mr. Tennent with acting the part rather of a wild enthusiast, than of a meek and prudent Christian; but he insisted that they should proceed, and left them in astonishment, not knowing how to act, when the bell summoned them to court.

Mr. Tennent had not walked far in the street, before he met a man and his wife, who stopped him, and asked if his name was not Tennent. He answered in the affirmative, and begged to know if they had any business with him. The man replied, "You best know." He told his name, and said that he was from a certain place (which he mentioned) in Pennsylvania or Maryland; that Messrs. Rowland, Tennent, Anderson, and Stevens

had lodged either at his house, or in a house wherein he and his wife had been servants, (it is not now certain which) at a particular time, which he named; that on the following day they had heard Messrs. Tennent and Rowland preach; that some nights before they left home, he and his wife waked out of a sound sleep, and each told the other a dream, which had just occurred, and which proved to be the same in substance, to wit, that he, Mr. Tennent, was at Trenton, in the greatest possible distress, and that it was in their power, and theirs only, to relieve him. Considering it as a remarkable dream only, they again went to sleep, and it was twice repeated precisely in the same manner to both of them. This made so deep an impression on their minds, that they set off, and here they were, and would know of him what they were to do. Mr. Tennent immediately went with them to the court house, and his counsel on examining the man and his wife, and finding their testimony to be full to the purpose, were, as they well might be, in perfect astonishment. Before the trial began, another person, of a low character, called on Mr. Tennent, and told him that he was so harassed in conscience, for the part he had been acting in this prosecution, that he could get no rest till he had determined to come and make a full confession. He sent this man to his counsel also. Soon after, Mr. Stockton from Princeton appeared, and added his testimony. In short, they went to trial, and notwithstanding the utmost exertions of the ablest counsel, who had been em-



ployed to aid the attorney-general against Mr. Tennent, the advocates on his side so traced every movement of the defendant on the Saturday, Sunday, and Monday in question, and satisfied the jury so perfectly on the subject, that they did not hesitate honourably to acquit Mr. Tennent, by their unanimous verdict of *not guilty*, to the great confusion and mortification of his numerous opposers. Mr. Tennent assured the writer of this, that during the whole of this business, his spirits never failed him, and that he contemplated the possibility of his suffering so infamous a punishment, as standing in the pillory, without dismay, and had made preparation, and was fully determined, to deliver a sermon to the people in that situation, if he should be placed in it.

He went from Trenton to Philadelphia with his brother, and on his return, as he was rising the hill at the entrance of Trenton, without reflecting on what had happened, he accidentally cast his eyes on the pillory, which suddenly so filled him with horror, as completely to unman him, and it was with great difficulty that he kept himself from falling from his horse. He reached the tavern door in considerable danger, was obliged to be assisted to dismount, and it was some time before he could so get the better of his fears and confusion, as to proceed on his journey. Such is the constitution of the human mind ! It will often resist, with unshaken firmness, the severest external pressure and violence ; and sometimes it yields without reason, when it has nothing to fear. Or,

should we not rather say, such is the support which God sometimes affords to his people in the time of their necessity, and such the manner in which he leaves them to feel their own weakness when that necessity is past, that all the praise may be given where alone it is due ?

The writer sincerely rejoices, that though a number of the extraordinary incidents in the life of Mr. Tennent cannot be vouched by public testimony and authentic documents, yet the singular manner in which a gracious God did appear for this his faithful servant in the time of that distress, which has just been noticed, is a matter of public notoriety, and capable of being verified by the most unquestionable testimony and records.

This special instance of the interference of the righteous Judge of all the earth ought to yield consolation to pious people in seasons of great difficulty and distress, where there is none that seems able to deliver them. Yet it ought to afford no encouragement to the enthusiast, who refuses to use the means of preservation and deliverance, which God puts in his power. True confidence in God is always accompanied with the use of all lawful means, and with the rejection of all that are unlawful. It consists in an unshaken belief, that while right means are used, God will give that issue, which shall be most for his glory and his people's good. The extraordinary occurrence here recorded may also serve as a solemn warning to the enemies of God's people, and to the advocates of infidelity, not to strive by wicked and deep laid machi-

nations to oppose the success of the gospel, nor to attempt to injure the persons and characters of those faithful servants of the Most High, whom sooner or later he will vindicate to the unspeakable confusion of all, who have persecuted and traduced them.

Mr. Tennent was a man of the most scrupulous integrity, and though of a very grave and solemn deportment, he had a remarkably cheerful disposition, and generally communicated his instructions with so much ease and pleasantry, as greatly to gain the confidence and affection of all with whom he conversed, especially of children and young people. In all his intercourse with strangers and men of the world, he so managed his conversation, that, while he seldom neglected a proper opportunity to impress the mind with serious things, he always made them covet his company, rather than avoid it; well-knowing that there is a time for all things, and that even instruction and reproof, to be useful, must be prudently and seasonably given.

An instance of this disposition occurred in Virginia. The late Rev. Mr. Samuel Blair and Mr. Tennent were sent by the synod on a mission into that province. They stopped one evening at a tavern for the night, where they found a number of guests, with whom they supped in a common room. After the table was cleared, our missionaries withdrew from it. Cards were then called for, and the landlord brought in a pack and laid them on the table. One of the gentlemen very politely asked the missionaries if they would

not take a cut with them, not knowing that they were clergymen. Mr. Tennent very pleasantly answered, "With all my heart, gentlemen, if you can convince us, that thereby we can serve our Master's cause, or contribute any thing towards the success of our mission." This drew some smart reply from the gentleman, when Mr. T. with solemnity added, "We are ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We profess ourselves his servants; we are sent on his business, which is to persuade mankind to repent of their sins, to turn from them, and to accept of that happiness and salvation, which is offered in the gospel." This very unexpected reply, delivered in a very tender, though solemn manner, and with great apparent sincerity, so engaged the gentlemen's attention, that the cards were laid aside, and an opportunity was afforded, and cheerfully embraced, for explaining in a sociable conversation, during the rest of the evening, some of the leading and most important doctrines of the gospel, to the satisfaction and apparent edification of the hearers.

Resignation to the will of God in all his dispensations, however dark and afflictive, was among the excellent graces that adorned the character of this man of God. He had been tried in the course of God's providence in various ways; but domestic afflictions, as yet, had not been laid upon him. The time, however, was now come, when his character was to be brightened by a severe test of his resignation and obedience, a test attended with many peculiarly distressing circum-



stances. His youngest son, who was one of the handsomest of men, had just come into public life; had commenced the practice of physic; was married, and had one child. To the great distress of the parents, he discovered, though possessed of the sweetest temper, and most agreeable manners, no regard to the things that belonged to his eternal peace. Wholly negligent of religion, he indulged without restraint in the gaiety and follies of the world. The pious father was incessant at the throne of grace in behalf of his dissipated son; and was continually entertaining hopes that God would, by the influences of his Spirit, arrest him in his career, and bring him into the church of Christ, before his own summons should arrive; that he might die in peace, under the consoling hope of meeting this dear child in a better world. God, however, had determined otherwise; and the son, while engaged in inoculating a number of persons, in a house he had obtained for the purpose, near his father's neighbourhood, was seized in an unusually violent manner, with a raging fever. With the disorder, he was brought to a sudden and alarming view of his lost condition by nature, and the grievous transgressions of his past life. His sins were all set in dread array against him. A horrible darkness, and an awful dread of the eternal displeasure of Jehovah, fell on him, so as to make him the dreadful example of a convinced sinner, trembling under the confounding presence of an angry God. The affectionate and pious father was constantly in prayer and supplication, that God would have mercy

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upon him. He seldom left the side of his bed. For many days the fever raged with unabated fury; but the immediate distresses which it occasioned, were lost or forgotten in the severer pains of an awakened conscience. Such was the height to which his anguish at last arose, that the bed on which he lay was shaken by the violent and united convulsions of mind and body. The parents were touched to the quick; and their unqualified submission to God, as a sovereign God, was put to the most rigorous proof. But in due time they came out of the furnace, as gold tried in the fire. God, in his infinite and condescending grace and mercy, was at last pleased, in some measure, to hear the many prayers put up by the parents, and many pious friends, for the relief of the poor sufferer. His views of the lost state of man by nature; of the only means of salvation, through the death and sufferings of the Saviour; of the necessity of the inward regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit, became clear and consistent, and the importance of a practical acquaintance with these things was deeply and rationally impressed on his mind. He now saw that salvation, which he had deemed almost or altogether hopeless to him, was possible. His mind became calm, and he attended to religious instruction and advice. In a short time he began to give as much evidence of a change of heart as a death-bed repentance (rarely to be greatly relied on) can easily afford. He sent for his companions in iniquity, and, notwithstanding his disorder, exerted himself to the utmost to address them, which he did in the most

solemn, awful, and impressive manner, as a person, who, by the infinite mercy of a prayer-hearing God, had been delivered from a hell gaping to receive him. He besought them, by all the terrors of everlasting destruction ; by all the love they ought to bear to their own immortal souls ; by the love of a crucified Jesus, who poured out his soul unto death, that they might live forever ; by his own awful sufferings and terrible example ; that they would repent and turn to God. This happy change was a reviving cordial to the distressed and suffering father. His soul was overjoyed, and his mouth was full of the praises of redeeming love. His mind and spirits were hereby prepared with true resignation, to surrender the son of his advanced age to the God who gave him. After a few days more of severe suffering in body, but rejoicing in mind, the son was removed from time to eternity. There being no minister in the neighbourhood, the father undertook to preach a funeral sermon. All the son's old companions that could be sent to, were specially invited, and the old gentleman preached in such a manner, with a particular address to the young men, as to astonish every hearer : and while the seriously inclined wondered and adored, the careless were confounded and greatly alarmed.

Scarcely had Mr. Tennent got over this heavy affliction, and returned to an active and useful course of life for a few years, when God again called him to another severe and arduous struggle of the same nature. His eldest son, John, promised fair to make a distinguished figure in

life, had possessed a large share in the affections of both father and mother, and was more dear to their hearts than ever, since the death of his brother. It so happened, that the father was called to New York to heal some differences between the members of the church there. The next morning after his arrival, he went into a bookstore, when one of the ministers of the episcopal church came in, and on being introduced to him, after the common salutations, told him that he condoled with him on the death of his eldest son in the West Indies. The old gentleman was at first struck dumb. With difficulty he soon inquired how the news came ; and being informed that it was by a circuitous route, he suddenly turned, and said, "The will of the Lord be done." The clergyman observed, that it was happy for him to be able so cordially to submit to it. Mr. Tennent replied, "The Lord is my God, his will be done." On being asked by the bookseller, who was his particular friend, to retire into the house, and endeavour to settle his mind, he answered, "I am come on the Lord's business ; my duty requires that I should finish it ; when that is done I shall have time enough to mourn for my son." He immediately set off to attend his appointment, finished the business to his satisfaction, and next day returned home, where he found that a letter had been received by a neighbour, containing the same information which he had before received. Thus, on the most trying occasion, he showed the same submission to the allotment of Divine Providence that was discoverable in all his former conduct.



The following extract from a letter, written at this time to the writer of this narrative, will show the temper of his mind in his own language. "Freehold, March, 1776. My dear Sir, Perhaps before this comes to hand, you will be informed, that He who gave me the honourable epithet of a father, has, in his wise and unerring providence, written me childless.\* My son is dead. This account I had yesterday from a letter written to a friend; the account is so straight (though not circumstantial) that I cannot doubt its truth. The tender mother has not heard it, nor do I intend she shall, until authenticated. This I mention as a caution to you, in case you should write me before the matter is published. Let the dear heart have all possible ease, before the load, which it is likely will try her life, falls upon her. I know her attachment to that child; his conduct has been such as greatly endeared him to us. Our pains and expense in his education have been great, but infinitely short of what God has done for him. He has, therefore, the best right to him. Should we then,

....  
\* He seems, in the depth of his distress, to have forgotten, that he yet had one son left, although he was 800 miles distant from him.

were it in our power, obstruct his taking full possession of his own property? God forbid! This, Sir, through God's goodness, is not only what I say, but it is the temper of my soul, for which God only deserves the honour. It is now above fifty years since my soul resigned itself to God in Jesus Christ. I had then neither son nor daughter; I was completely satisfied with him, and, blessed be his name, I am so now. Have I then reason to cry out as if ruined? O! no: on the contrary, I have the utmost reason for thanksgiving, that he has not, in righteous judgment, deprived me of himself, in whom all fulness dwells. My wife and myself are now hastening to childhood! if spared a few years, we shall need one to lead us; and we shall look to you under God. All the benefit you can expect from so doing, will consist in the satisfaction of your own mind, that you have helped two old people through the last steps of their pilgrimage." Thus did this pious man turn every event of life, however afflictive, to the praise and glory of God, and he seldom omitted an opportunity of inculcating the same disposition on all his acquaintance.

(To be continued.)

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## Religious Communications.

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A DISSERTATION ON JOHN'S  
SIXTH VIAL.

No. 2.

Revelation xvi. 12—16.

If we have found the *dragon*,  
our next inquiry will be con-

cerning the *beast*. This cannot be the *first* beast, which came up out of the sea, and to which the dragon gave his power; for this, we have seen, is become one with the dragon, and was so,

long before the period designated by the sixth vial. Therefore, the beast here intended, must be the second beast, mentioned chap. xiii. 11, &c. "which came up out of the earth, and which exercised all the power of the first beast, and caused all them, that dwell on the earth, to worship the first beast." The question then is, What power is designated by this *second beast*?

Some have supposed this to be the *Roman hierarchy*, or *papal clergy*. But this interpretation confounds the beast with the *false prophet*, and makes but *two* mouths, instead of *three*, out of which the frogs issue; for the false prophet is that hierarchy, as will soon be shown.

Others have supposed the second beast to be those *German principalities*, in which the civil and ecclesiastical powers are united, as they are in the pope. But against this interpretation there are weighty objections. These principalities are parts of the German empire, and so members of the body of the dragon, or first beast, rather than a distinct beast. I do not find that these principalities have been so associated among themselves as to form a separate body, and act a part distinct from the empire, in the persecution of the church. And they have never been, either separately or conjunctly, so respectable, as to merit a distinct character in this great prophetic drama. I rather prefer the opinion of a late English writer, who supposes that the second beast is the *French monarchy*, especially under the government of the family of the *Capets*.

The French monarchy, in the

first, or *Merovinian* line of kings, began not far from the time, when the bishop of Rome assumed to be the father, or pope, or universal head of the church. Pepin, the first king in the next, or *Carolinian* line, granted to the pope, about the middle of the eighth century, the exarchate of Ravenna, and thus made him a temporal power. In the tenth century began the late or the *Capetian* line of kings, under whom France has been remarkably ambitious, and often very powerful, has been greatly devoted to the see of Rome, has contributed more to its support than any other kingdom, and has persecuted the Protestants with distinguished cruelty and wantonness as far as her power extended. The inhuman tortures and massacres in the time of Lewis XIV. have never been exceeded in any part of the papal dominions. And, which is very remarkable, the spiritual tyranny of France was a system of its own. It was independent of the pope, and yet administered in subservience to his views, and in support of his power. "In all other kingdoms, where popery prevails, the spiritual power is exercised by the pope. Heretics, as they are called, are accused, tried, and condemned in *his* courts, by laws issuing from *him*, and by *his* ministers. Kings are only his executioners. It was otherwise in *France*. There the *king* issued edicts, and erected and appointed offices for the trial and punishment of his Protestant subjects. By virtue of power derived from the *king*, not from the *pope*, Protestants were harassed, dragooned, banished, then forbidden to leave



the kingdom, given up to the brutal ferocity of the soldiery, imprisoned, condemned, and executed. This was a tyranny perfect in its kind, unknown in other kingdoms, and perfectly resembling that of the papal beast. It was properly an exercise of the "power of the first beast."

If we have found the dragon and the beast, there will remain no doubt concerning the *false prophet*. This must be the *papal clergy*, or the *hierarchy* of the church of *Rome*. In this interpretation, Protestant writers, are, I suppose, generally agreed; and to this we are indubitably led by St. John himself. He says, chap. xix. 20, "The beast was taken, and with him the false prophet, that wrought miracles before him," (or did wonders in the presence of the beast) "with which he deceived them, that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image." The false prophet is here described, as acting in subservience to, and in concert with the beast; as making an ostentation of miracles, and as using every argument and artifice to support the cause of the beast, and to promote idolatrous worship. He can therefore be no other, than the *Roman hierarchy*.

Mahomet is by his followers called *the prophet*; and he is vulgarly called *the false prophet*. But he is never so called in sacred prophecy. John, in his prediction of this impostor, makes no mention of him under such a title. Indeed, John's description of the false prophet is quite inapplicable, and in some respects wholly opposite to the character of Mahomet and his

successors; for they never acted in concert with idolatrous powers, but invariably opposed them. Besides, it should be remembered, that John never gives names to persons or things by anticipation, but rather by allusions to names in the Old Testament.

We have endeavoured to ascertain the characters, intended by the *dragon*, *beast*, and *false prophet*. "From their mouths issued three unclean spirits," foul, odious, and clamorous, "like frogs. These are the spirits of devils, which go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world."

As by the dragon, beast, and false prophet must be understood, not single persons, but communities; so by the three spirits, we must understand *companies* of spirits or persons, not merely three individuals. The work here ascribed to the three spirits, is too great to be accomplished by three single persons.

They are called *unclean spirits*, and the spirits of *devils*, to signify their wicked and irreligious principles, and their impure and turbulent dispositions; or their opposition to the faith and purity of the gospel, and to the peace and happiness of mankind. They are men, engaged in the cause of error and vice, which is the cause, in which the devil acts, and in which he employs his agents.

"They go forth to gather the kings to battle;" to foment sedition in society; to excite opposition to government; to urge the powers of the earth to mutual destruction, and all with a view to exterminate the religion

of Christ, which is "their torment."

These impure spirits, if our interpretation is just, proceed, in an eminent manner, from the German empire, from the French monarchy, and from the papal hierarchy.

Now, if the battle here mentioned, is to be understood of a literal war, and if we are now under the sixth vial, then we are to look for the causes of this last, and of the next preceding European wars, in these three sources. And were not these wars, especially the former, first excited, and afterward encouraged and continued, by the influence of the German court, the French royalists and nobles, and the papal clergy in France and other countries? This was the general opinion in the time of the French revolution. These wars, contrary to all human policy, have had a great effect in drying up the mystical Euphrates, and in opening the way for the subversion of mystical Babylon; and the horrors of these wars have been, though not exclusively, yet principally felt, in those parts of Europe, which are subject to the papal beast. Even France, which has been a distinguished agent in this subversion, has had her share in the common calamity and distress. All this is manifestly agreeable to prophecy.

Or, if by the battle of the great day of God Almighty, we understand a metaphorical war, a war against religion, we shall still find the prophecy verified. It is well known, that for many years, there has been in Europe, and especially in France and Germany, great opposition to the

religion of the gospel; and that of late years this opposition has increased and become more open and active than it was formerly. Not only the peculiar doctrines of the gospel have been denied, but the essential duties of morality and the very principles of civil society have been treated with contempt. That the war against religion might be conducted more systematically and successfully, its enemies in some parts of Europe have formed themselves into societies for that purpose.

This opposition has in a great measure been owing to the causes already mentioned; the tyranny of the German empire, the despotism of the French monarchy, and the foolery, bigotry, and intolerance of the Catholic church. In those countries the most arbitrary and rigorous restraints have been laid on men's natural, social, and religious liberties. From such restraints naturally arise prejudices, discontents, and impatient and restless passions, which, though for a while repressed, will sooner or later give themselves vent in some way or other. Hence it was, that many men of learning and talents, finding it dangerous to speak openly in ordinary conversation on certain things relative to the established religion and government, instituted clubs and organized societies for free discussion of such matters. It is natural to suppose that men associating and conversing under the influence of strong passions and prejudices, should overlook the laudable object of reformation in religion and government, and contemplate the subversion of both. It



is not the nature of passion to view things candidly, and to separate the precious from the vile ; but to confound the good with the bad, and to destroy both promiscuously.

Bigotry in religion, like despotism in government, may endure for a season, sometimes longer than we should have imagined ; but, by overacting its part, it will in time destroy itself. As a revolution in despotic governments often produces anarchy in the first instance, but may terminate in something more reasonable ; so a revolution in bigotry and superstition may be immediately followed with an apparent increase of irreligion, but be ultimately productive of a real reformation. Prophecy teaches us to expect, that, on the demolition of the papal superstition, there will be a remarkable prevalence of infidelity ; but in a short time there will be a general spread of pure Christianity.

John farther says, "The kings of the earth are gathered to battle into a place, called in the Hebrew tongue *Armageddon*," or the mountain of destruction. The name is taken from the ancient *Megiddo*, or *Megiddon* ; a place famous in the Jewish history for war and slaughter. The late extraordinary wars in Europe have had their principal seat in the Netherlands, and adjacent parts, which, like the *Megiddo* of the Hebrews, have long been fields of blood and slaughter.

The battle, to which the kings are gathered, is called "the battle of the great day of God Almighty ;" a day, in which the cause of religion is assailed, and in which God is about to perform some great work in its support ;

a day which will nearly precede the effusion of the seventh vial, & the total destruction of the mystical Babylon. The two last wars in Europe have had a more remarkable effect, than any preceding wars, in subverting the papal power.

(To be continued.)

## THE DECALOGUE.

No. 5.

### *Fifth Commandment.*

"HONOUR thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

From father and mother all other duties originate. Duty is reciprocal. Parents must not provoke their children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord ; and children must honour their parents. The command is a little varied in Leviticus. *Ye shall fear every man his mother and father, and keep my Sabbaths.* Honour in that passage is explained by fear in this. Father is mentioned first in the one, but mother in the other, probably intimating that both have an equal claim upon the honour and fear of children. Instruction of a delicate nature may be involved in the appendix to the command ; "ye shall fear every man his mother and father, and shall keep my Sabbaths." The command of a mother and father is binding ; but if it interfere with the command of God, obey God rather than man. Should parents require that children break the Sabbath, or throw contempt upon any of God's ordinances ; obedience, otherwise indispensable, must be withheld,

that we may discover proper respect to the highest of all authorities.

Grateful and affectionate ought we to be to our parents. They watched over our infant years with anxiety, and have been unremitting in their friendly offices. Their kind attachment to us, their mature judgment, and their authority over us, lay the foundation of dutiful attachment to their persons, deference to their judgment, and obedience to their commands. If they are in circumstances which require our sympathy or service, how can piety be better expressed, than by returning the sympathy and service which we received from them, when in infancy we were thrown helpless upon their care. The profligate Jews had a strange contrivance for satisfying their own minds, while they neglected this duty. Our Lord severely animadverted upon their conduct, Matt. xv. 3, 6. The supply, to which parents were entitled, they devoted by a rash vow to the sacred treasury, and thereby vainly imagined, and were confirmed in the imagination by an avaricious priesthood, that they were absolved from any further obligations to either of their parents. Such evasions are in the highest degree criminal. *Children, says the apostle, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing in the sight of the Lord.* The child Jesus was subject to his parents; and he ended a useful life by an act of duty to his mother, providing for her future sustenance and comfort.

All nations have had some sense of the duty, which children owe to their parents. It was

enacted by the Athenian legislator, that whoever refused to maintain his aged parents should be deemed *infamous*. The laws of Romulus carried the matter much too far, subjecting the child, of whatever age, or however dignified by talents, office, or reputation, so entirely to the power of the parents, that of his own authority he might imprison or enslave him, and even put him to death. The youth of Sparta were obliged to rise up, whenever their superiors in age appeared, to give place, meeting them in the street, and to be silent in their presence. This duty, as all others, was taught very deficiently, in the systems of morality known to the Gentiles. In the sacred page it appears in its full extent, and is enjoined by proper motives. The command before us includes relative duties of every kind, requiring us to be dutiful to superiors, whether in the family, the church, or the state.

This commandment is the first, to which a promise is annexed. In the second commandment, indeed, there is a general declaration of mercy toward them, who love God, and keep his commandments. But this is the only precept of the decalogue, which contains a promise peculiar to itself.

Let children honour their father and mother, that their days may be long upon the land, which the Lord their God giveth them. Under the Jewish dispensation, to curse, or to strike a parent was punished with death. The same punishment was inflicted on those, who continued in stubborn disobedience to a parent's command. But obedi-



ent children dwelt in safety. The blessing of God visibly attended them, securing such temporal prosperity, as would be for their real advantage. Such persons live in honour and peace. They shall come to their grave in a full age, as a shock of corn cometh in its season. The heathen encouraged obedience to parents by the same argument. Euripides says, that *children, who honour their parents, are dear to the gods, both living and dead*. Senarius is mentioned by Stephanus as saying; "Thou shalt live as long as thou canst desire, if thou nourish thy aged parents." Hence Xenophon's description of children who deserve praise; *those who nourish the aged*. The daughter, whose breasts supplied nourishment to an aged father, arbitrarily condemned to die by hunger, has acquired fame which ages shall listen to, and respect. Such actions perpetuate the name, and give a kind of immortality on earth.

PHILOLOGOS.

#### ON RELIGIOUS SINCERITY.

THE insincerity of many, who profess to be Christians, is to be deeply lamented, as the bane of their own salvation, as well as the cause of exposing religion to frequent though unmerited reproach. It is of the last importance, therefore, for all who have the form of godliness, to ascertain to their own conviction, whether they have sincerely embraced the gospel, or have only a name to live, while they are still dead in trespasses and sin. Without this conviction, it is impossi-

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ble they can enjoy either solid comfort or joyful hope, as creatures formed for eternity, and hereafter to be judged according to the gospel. To assist them in this interesting inquiry, their attention is earnestly requested to the following observations.

1. *Sincerity in the profession of Christianity is inseparable from just and impressive views of Christian truth.*

The whole value of Christianity to men ultimately rests on the truth of this principle. If sincerity, unconnected with any particular views of religious truth, be all that is necessary, of what use is the gospel, as the means of salvation? We may with impunity believe any thing we please, and our final happiness not be endangered, though we know not whom nor what we adore. Sincerity considered in itself, indeed, is perfectly compatible with the most pernicious errors, both in religion and in morals; with the rejection of the most essential doctrines and precepts of Christianity; nay, with the disbelief of the existence of God. It has been combined with ignorance and idolatry; and the history of the world loudly attests the atrocity of the deeds, which its spirit dictates, and its authority sanctions. It erected the stake, and lighted up the faggot of persecution in popish countries. It unsheathed the sword of exterminating violence, and brutal sensuality, where the crescent of Mahomet was raised. And still, it kindles the fire that consumes the widow on the plains of Hindostan; raises the knife that is plunged in the trembling victim, and gives vigour to the unrelenting arm that sac-

rifices a son or a daughter on the bloodstained altars of frantic superstition. Separated from the principles of truth, sincerity, therefore, instead of being valuable, is dangerous in the highest degree. It fosters the spirit of superstition, and is the parent of the most enormous crimes.

But what is truth? or where is it to be found? To men, who acknowledge the inspiration and authority of Scripture, the answer is obvious. That God is holy and just; that men are depraved and guilty, and therefore obnoxious to punishment; but that God sent his Son, and he voluntarily came into the world, by his obedience and sufferings as a propitiation for sin, to reconcile men unto God by his own blood; that repentance and faith, both communicated to individual sinners by the influence and energy of the Holy Spirit, are the only effectual means of being interested in the redemption proclaimed through the Saviour; and that holiness, or a transformation of the heart and character into the resemblance of the divine image, is the only sure preparation for the heavenly state. These are the few simple truths, which the gospel reveals, as the object of a sinner's knowledge and belief. These, known and believed, are the foundation of Christian sincerity: so essential to its existence, that whoever disbelieves and rejects them, practically pronounces against himself a sentence of exclusion from the blessings of the gospel.

The danger of mistake on this point is so imminent, that some illustration of it may not be unnecessary. If then religion consist in worshipping God, and per-

forming the duties, which he has enjoined, this religion cannot be sincerely embraced if we regard God in any other light, than that in which he has been pleased to make himself known to us; or neglect the performance of these duties. For instance, though we should succeed in persuading ourselves, that God is altogether such as we are, indifferent to the principles and conduct of his worshippers: we may be perfectly sincere in this persuasion, and under its influence be guilty of the most aggravated sins. But if we have received from himself an unequivocal assurance that he looketh on the heart and trieth the reins of the children of men, and that whosoever committeth sin is worthy of death, though we should forget or despise this truth, or not feel its influence, if it has been made known to us, our sincerity in a contrary conviction will never be sustained as a satisfactory apology for our disobedience. Or, if we should believe that our supposed good works will procure the pardon of sin and acceptance with God, while he has made a diametrically opposite declaration, that "by the deeds of the law no flesh living can be justified," though we should maintain our own opinion, ever so firmly or sincerely, we must be regarded as real, though perhaps not avowed enemies of the cross of Christ, and as such, be justly chargeable with neglecting the great salvation. In a word, if we have received the revelation of truth and duty, if we acknowledge its authority, and have access to know and read it for ourselves, or to hear it explained by others; unless we sincerely



believe and cordially obey it, however much we may deceive ourselves or impose on others, we are only almost, not altogether Christians. The truth is not in us, and our sincerity in error, when we have the means of being undeceived, instead of excusing us, must aggravate our condemnation before God.

2. *Sincerity in the profession of Christianity is inseparable from ardor and diligence in discovering what is truth and duty.*

The situation of some men is unquestionably much more favourable than that of others, for acquiring Christian knowledge. But if the mind is at all capable of reflection, and interested in inquiring after truth, even in the most unfavourable situation, sincerity will lead to the most earnest desires, and issue in the attainment of considerable knowledge on religious subjects. Sincerity in what is known, is all that is or can be required; yet, it will not allow a man to be satisfied with a low degree of knowledge, but will powerfully incite him to seriousness and diligence in examining what is revealed, that he may be *thoroughly* furnished unto every good word and work. Ignorance is often the source of error in opinion, corruption in morals, and ruin to the soul. And if the opportunity and means of knowledge be deliberately and wilfully neglected, it is impossible that the plea of sincerity can be of any avail.

*Sincerity, therefore, is directly opposed to indifference.* It is indeed altogether incompatible with such a spirit. To him, who submits to the influence of religious insensibility, the most alarming

prospects of approaching misery, and the most alluring invitations of promised mercy, are presented in vain. The profession of religion may be made, the conduct may be free from open ungodliness; but a lifeless form is all that exists. But he, who desires in sincerity and truth to serve the Lord Christ, is all ardor and alacrity. Constitutional temper may incline him to sloth, but if he feels the importance of religion, he will shake off this disposition so unfavourable to every dignified pursuit, and make salvation his chief concern. Unacquainted with arts and sciences he may be; but he will study the word of God, and derive from it a knowledge and a wisdom, as much more excellent and valuable than that, which earthly learning can afford, as the soul is than the body, and the glories of heaven than the pleasures of the world. He is anxious to know the will of God concerning all his faith and duty, that he may cordially embrace the one, and diligently perform the other. Having an object of everlasting importance before him, he pursues it with ardor, and is daily advancing toward its possession. His heart is engaged; his affections seek a reconciled God in Christ, as their supreme good; and by this he is distinguished both from the hypocrite, and from the formalist.

His mind being thus under the power of the truth as it is in Jesus, opened to discern the importance not only of acting conscientiously in what is already known to be right, but of acquiring more extensive and accurate knowledge concerning the

path of duty, surveys every object, from which this knowledge may be derived, with a look of earnest desire, and animating hope. *The Scriptures* are examined, and both the precepts, which it inculcates, and the characters, which it describes, are seriously and attentively studied. The *conduct of Providence* to himself and others; the privileges, which he enjoys; the talents, which he possesses, and which he ought to cultivate; and the situation into which he has brought himself, or has been unintentionally, or unexpectedly led, are reviewed, and the duties, which all of them require, deliberately and devoutly considered. He may have acted improperly in the past, and may see abundant cause for the deepest contrition; and the course, which is now marked out for him, may be painful to natural feeling and beset with numerous difficulties or dangers; but sincerity will impel him, neither to revolt from the one, nor to shrink at the other. He will not be deterred from inquiry, by the fear of having his prejudices shocked, his sentiments altered, or his habits reproved, for he is willing to renounce every thing that he has maintained most obstinately, or cherished most fondly, if convinced that it has not been the will of God.

Having obtained information, he will not consult with flesh and blood, but resolutely obey the call of duty, and "follow on" with increasing ardor "to know the Lord." He wishes to be guided by a conscience enlightened in the mind of God, and is therefore open to conviction, though the truth, which produces it, should be learned from an

enemy, or obtained from a source, to which he had formerly the strongest aversion. Points of difficulty he will bring before the Lord; and though he does not neglect the ordinary means of direction, he will look upward to Him, whose wisdom can guide in the most perplexing path, whose power can remove or overcome the most alarming difficulties. "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do! Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth! It is as my meat and drink to do thy will." These are the expressions of a mind, where religious sincerity reigns; and mark a spirit essentially opposite to that self satisfaction and confidence, which formalists feel; and to that constant struggle between their real and their assumed character, which hypocrites experience.

3. *Sincerity in the profession of Christianity is uniformly connected with a minute and universal regard to duty.*

There may be little external difference between the religious conduct of the sincere and that of the hypocritical Christian. Both are punctual in attending the house of God, in performing the private exercises of devotion, in reading the Scriptures, and offering up the forms of prayer and praise. They both profess an attachment to the doctrines of godliness, and seem to be equally circumspect in their moral conduct. Yet, on attentively examining their characters, we discover many unequivocal marks of an important and essential difference.

The hypocrite or the formalist is satisfied with observing the *stated* solemnities of religious worship;



with a *general* conformity of conduct to the divine law ; and with external decency of manners ; even while his heart is filled with the most ungodly principles, and unsanctified desires. His chief anxiety is to secure himself from the charge of that very hypocrisy of which he is inwardly conscious ; to enjoy the reputation of a saint, while he is in truth a determined sinner ; to reconcile God and Mammon, religion and the world. If this can be partially attained, he does not hesitate in secret to commit the most flagrant sins. Like an actor on the stage, his character is assumed, and he labours to support it ; but behind the scenes, he is destitute of all that excellence and dignity, which in the eye of the public, he so successfully imitates.

Not so the man, who sincerely and from the heart, engages in the service of God. His public character is indeed externally the same ; but this character is not assumed for a season only, or to attain some worldly end. It is real, and therefore continues when he retires to his private walk. He knows that the dispositions ought to be pure, as well as the actions blameless ; that to feel no solicitude to have the heart sanctified, is to cleanse only "the outside of the cup and platter," to substitute appearance for reality, and shew for worth ; to have a greater regard to the opinion of the world than to the judgment of God. It will, therefore, be his anxious desire and habitual study to have the principles of godliness strengthened within him, that when he presents to the Lord the sacrifice of Christian conduct, it may

indeed be a reasonable, a living, and a holy offering. He will deeply lament, and ingenuously confess in his secret devotions, those plain omissions of duty, those open acts of sin, those compliances with what he perceives to have been inconsistent with his character, those ebullitions of passion, and those intemperances of language of which he is conscious ; nay, even those unholy thoughts and impure desires, which, though unknown to the world, are not concealed from the eye of Him, who searcheth the hearts and trieth the reins of the children of men. These, the hypocrite never thinks of, and to their criminality the formalist is insensible ; but the truly sincere Christian views them in the light of the gospel, as the remaining members of the old man, which is corrupt with his deceitful lusts, which must be resisted and crucified, to enable him to serve God in spirit and in truth. He therefore labours to maintain a conscience void of offence towards God as well as towards men ; guards against sins of the heart ; watches and resists those risings of unbelief by which the Holy Spirit is grieved ; and which are the beginnings of desires and resolutions, which, if carried into action, would destroy his comfort and disgrace his profession. He desires to love God more and serve him better ; and mourns on account of the coldness of his love and the imperfections of his service.

It is evident that this tenderness of conscience must influence his conduct in his private retirement and domestic intercourse, when secluded from the compa-

ny and occupations of the world. As Christian sincerity is inimical to every art of injustice and fraud in the transactions of business, even when there is little probability or even possibility of detection; it is equally hostile to every thing that encourages self-deceit or hypocrisy, in his secret intercourse with God. It improves, and represses languor in devotion: excites to fervor of spirit and cheerfulness of service: removes and prevents carelessness in duty; and aims at the total destruction of that deceitfulness of sin, which endeavours to compensate for the commission of one trespass by abstinence from another, or by diligence and fidelity in those parts of obedience, where neglect or unfaithfulness would be more easily noticed, and more certainly condemned.

Finally, sincerity will not admit either of reserve in the obedience that Christianity requires, or of palliation for neglecting it, but embraces the whole extent and every particular instance of duty arising from the circumstances, the station and the relations, in which a Christian is placed. All that is known to be duty, he must study to perform, whatever hazard may be incurred, or difficulties encountered, or trials endured. In all places and at all times sincerity should animate the heart, and direct the conduct. Imperfection, indeed, is inseparable from the present service, even of the most advanced Christian. There is always something which he ought to have done, which he has neglected; or something from which he ought to have abstained, which he has performed; but sincerity, instead of vindicating, condemns

this misconduct, and uniformly leads the mind to humiliation and repentance when conscious of being thus guilty. Like the apostle Paul, he "counts not that he has already attained, either is already perfect, but this one thing he does, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those which are before, he presses towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Reader! examine thy own heart. Withdraw thy attention from the scenes of life: from the character of other men; from the thousand objects which would interrupt the intercourse with thyself; and survey the principles by which thy heart is actuated; compare thy conduct with thy professions, and both with the standard of truth and duty, which the gospel contains.

Reader! Art thou trusting that thou art righteous and despising others; or satisfied with outward decorum of manners; or ignorant of the devices of a deceitful heart, or led away by error from the path of Christian doctrine? Thy condition is dangerous, thy hopes of heaven are fallacious! Hast thou never prayed; or dost thou neglect daily prayer for grace to guide thy feet into the way of peace? Thou must be treading in the way of death! Destruction awaits thee in the land of spirits, except thou repent!

Reader! Hast thou never suspected the danger of thy state as a transgressor of the law of God? or dost thou not with an earnestness of mind proportioned in some measure to the importance of the subject, ask the direction and blessing of God, that thou



mayest know thyself, and live by the faith of the gospel? Dost thou never say from the heart with the Psalmist, "Search me, O Lord, and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts, and see the wicked way that is in me, and lead me in the way everlasting?" Consider, I entreat thee, the danger of insensibility, the danger of insincerity.

By the gospel thou must be judged in the great day of the Lord; self-deceit will then be unavailing, when every thought will be brought into judgment, and every secret work, whether it be good or evil. Examine, then, thy heart; thy conscience must be purified from dead works, in order to enable thee to serve aright the living and the true God. The blood of the Son of God alone has this efficacy; and if thou despise it, there remaineth no more for thee a sacrifice for sin, but a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

The Lord give thee understanding in all things to do his will. So shalt thou in simplicity and godly sincerity fulfil his pleasure. Remember the words of Solomon. "He that walketh uprightly, walketh surely; but he that perverteth his way shall be known." D. D.

March, 1806.

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MR. GIBBON.

ON reading the life of Gibbon, and observing the cheerless gloom, which shrouded his mind at the hour of death, I was struck with the confirmation of truth afforded by this circum-

stance. *The way of the wicked is as darkness.* The sick bed tries the correctness of principles, and the king of terrors, as he approaches, sweeps away all the false hopes of the unbeliever, and scatters them to the winds. Infidelity may give her votaries the satisfaction of being free from enthusiasm and superstition; she may harden their minds; but she furnishes them with no support under the various evils, which we are called to suffer.

The death of Mr. Gibbon was such as we might expect from the principles, which he professed. Speaking of the decease of lady Sheffield, in a letter to her husband, he observes; "She is now at rest; and, *if there be a future state*, her mild virtues have surely entitled her to the reward of pure and perfect felicity.—The only consolation in these melancholy trials, *the only one at least in which I have any confidence*, is the presence of a real friend." In these passages the writer expresses a doubt respecting his future existence, stumbles upon the error of the self righteous, that the ordinary virtues of social life merit the reward of everlasting blessedness, and gives up at once all the rich consolation, which a belief in the righteous government of the Father of mercies is calculated to afford us under afflictions and troubles.

In his memoirs he says, "I must reluctantly observe, that two causes, the abbreviation of time and the failure of hope will always tinge with a browner shade the evening of life." This is the gloomy sentiment of an atheist, whose views terminate with this world, who considers himself as the offspring of chance, and who

is cheered with no glad expectation, that "the evening of life" will be succeeded by a glorious morning.

It is true that the aged are frequently peevish and unhappy. The acuteness of their senses is blunted by long action. Their eye is no longer delighted with beauty, nor their ear enraptured by melody. The agitation of business no longer exhilarates their minds. Besides this, they find few or none of their early companions, with whom they may recal the days that are past.

These are the causes, and not those assigned by Mr. Gibbon, which will always operate in a greater or less degree to diminish the enjoyments of those, who have travelled far into years.

But to the aged saint, whose gray hairs are found in the way of righteousness, "*the abbreviation of time*" is a subject of joy, not a source of grief; and with "*the failure of hope*" he is unacquainted. He exclaims in the language, and with the exulting anticipation of St. Paul, "The time of my departure is at hand! I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also, that love his appearing." Had not Mr. Gibbon been fearful of this appearing of Jesus Christ, when "he shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God," to punish the despisers of his words; or had he not looked upon all beyond the grave as one hideous night, whose silence will never be

disturbed by the footsteps of living beings, he would not have expressed his conviction, that hope must necessarily fail, as life approaches its termination. If he had not been destitute of the joyful hope of *immortality*, which only is the glory of man, such a sentiment his pen never would have recorded.

And what *was* the death of Mr. Gibbon? It was cheerless and awful. We hear no expressions of resignation or hope. We behold no delightful anticipations of blessedness. We see not even an intimation of his belief, that another state of existence would succeed that, which was approaching its end. All was silent as the grave, to which he was going.

He said to his servant, just before his death, "*Pourquoi est ce que vous me quittez?*" *Why do you leave me?* And the last words which he uttered, expressed his desire that his servant would not leave him.

Thus perished this insidious enemy of Christianity. I said to myself, if infidelity can throw no ray of light upon the darkness of the grave; if she can give no support to the sinking spirit; if she can administer no consolation, when this world has lost its power to please; if she can stamp upon the pale countenance of the dying no impressions of hope, of joy, of triumph; then, "O my soul, come not thou into her secret," and let not her delusions beguile thee! W.

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#### SKETCH OF THE CHARACTER AND EXERCISES OF MISS A. D.

"RELIGION," says one of its most distinguished champions



and ornaments, "dispenses its choicest cordials in the seasons of exigence, in poverty, in exile, in sickness, and in death." It can not only refine and elevate all earthly enjoyments, but supply their loss. It can do more. It can convert the greatest outward calamities into positive, substantial, everlasting blessings. Nor can any thing be more truly honourable to the gospel and grace of our DIVINE REDEEMER, than the sweet peace and cheerfulness with which they have inspired thousands, on whom a thoughtless world has looked down with pity, mixed with horror.

Among these happy sufferers, few occupy a more conspicuous place, than Miss A. D. a young woman recently deceased. For several of the last years of her life, she was confined by a complication of maladies, to a bed of unutterable, and almost unparalleled distress. In the early period of her sickness, she seemed a stranger to religion, and its comforts. But between two and three years previous to her decease, she exhibited a remarkable revolution in her sentiments and feelings. Of this happy change, her afflictions were, under the divine blessing, the principal instrument. Under their pressure, she was led into very distinct and evangelical views of the evil of sin, the depravity of her heart, the glory of the Redeemer, and the infinite worth of gospel blessings. Her heart seemed gradually moulded into a temper of sweet submission to the divine will, of humble confidence in the divine mercy, and of joyful complacency in the perfections and government

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of God. Often, in the latter years of life, did she express her wonder and astonishment at her former insensibility, at the patience of God in waiting thus long upon her, and at the overflowings of that condescension and goodness, which could pardon and save one so unworthy and vile as she. Her patience, serenity, and even cheerfulness under her sufferings (her pain being, for years, literally without intermission) were remarkable indeed. Some, who familiarly knew, and often visited her, have declared, that they never witnessed a solitary instance of impatience, manifested either by her countenance or lips. Not unfrequently, when every nerve of her frame was agitated by extremity of pain, and when her bed trembled underneath her, has she conversed at length on religion, and on the many mercies vouchsafed her, without once adverting to her sufferings. It was remarkable that some of her best enjoyments seemed to occur in seasons of this kind. She once remarked to a friend, that for a few preceding days, she had enjoyed a sweeter savour of divine things, than ever before. "Every thing," she said, "seemed sweet. Oh," she exclaimed, "there was such a sweetness in Jesus! My soul ran out in love to a chastening God, and rejoiced in him! He was all in all. Oh, that all would praise him! My soul delights in him. Oh," she added, "my body was filled with pain, but my soul was more filled with comfort. Compared to one view of such glories, and the enjoyment of one half hour's communion with God, these afflictions are not worth mention-

ing, ought not to be named; nay, are not worthy to have a thought of them pass through the mind. Oh," said she, "entertain high and honourable thoughts of God concerning this thing. I now place this distress among my choicest mercies." Soon after her happy change, she said to a friend; "How many nights have I kept myself awake in thinking on and pursuing the vanities of the world; and it is but just that I should now be kept awake, and smart for it." When exercised with excruciating pain in her side, she once said; "I have been thinking that my side was only pierced with pain, but Christ's side with a spear. My smart cannot benefit others; but by Christ's stripes are many healed." She added, that though health was such a great blessing, yet if her's could be restored, and she must in that case be as vain and worldly as she once was, she would greatly prefer her present painful situation. On another occasion, she remarked, that she had experienced more enjoyment on her sick bed, than in all the former years of her life. On a certain occasion, she said to a friend, that in the night season, she was in an agony of distress, and much wished for half an hour of sleep; but immediately a new thought arose; O, how good was God to permit her to lie awake, and contemplate on his perfections! O, it was sweeter than sleep. At another time, after a night of excruciating distress, she said, "For a few hours my room was a little heaven. Oh, it was sweet being awake, and receiving pain from such a hand. Oh, how the glory, pow-

er and goodness of God shine in this affliction. Once I saw no goodness in it; but now, the sharper the pain, the brighter his goodness appears." In another season of exquisite suffering, she expressed herself thus: "When one pain is gone, I can welcome another. My heavenly Father waves his rod over my body, but smiles upon my soul."

She frequently manifested a very tender anxiety lest any should think the less honourably of God and religion, on account of her sufferings. Two of her friends having watched with her in a night of remarkable distress, one remarked to the other, that probably she had suffered more than martyrdom that night. This she overheard; and in a feeble and very affecting manner said, "O do not think hard of God on account of my sufferings. Think how great the consolations are which he affords me. He might justly send all these afflictions, and none of the consolations. The one I deserve, and the other I do not. He is good, He is kind."

She often expressed a lively concern for the honour and prosperity of religion. She manifested a most tender pity for the multitudes around her, who lived without its blessings, and an ardent desire that they might taste and see that the Lord is good. Whatever tended to bring reproach on the name of Christ, gave her great pain. She frequently mourned over the coldness of Christians, and most of all, over her own.

She was remarkable for speaking of divine things in a manner equally distant from levity and ostentation, and which showed



that her very heart was penetrated by what she uttered. Amid her highest consolations, she seemed deeply sensible of her unworthiness. Being asked, a few weeks before she died, how death appeared, she replied: "It is a solemn thing to die: I wish to examine myself; but I cannot make the thought seem terrifying." At other times, she expressed great *desires* to die. She was once heard thus to express herself in prayer: "Why are thy chariot wheels so long in coming? hasten them in thy time:" still adding, "not my will, but thine be done." At another time, she told a friend that a few nights before, she viewed herself upon the verge of eternity, and it was delightful entering. Being asked, what made it most delightful, she replied, "the glory, and the holiness—to be freed from a body of sin:" and added, "Christ is precious." She once declared, that the night preceding, her distress was very severe; but the glory, holiness, and justice of God seemed so clear, that it was sweetly consoling to her mind; and it seemed a favour to be kept awake, and contemplate upon his justice; and the sharper her pains, the more faithful his character appeared, and the stronger was the evidence of his love. "I long," said she, "to die; but feel willing to live and suffer." When death actually came on, her distress and weakness were such that she could say but little: yet that little manifested her mind to be in the same humble, tranquil, cheerful frame as ever; till, with scarce a struggle or a groan, she yielded up her spirit into the hand of her God.

The writer of the above enjoyed the privilege of frequently witnessing the piety, the sufferings and consolations of this highly favoured young woman. He offers this imperfect sketch, in the hope that so animating a testimony to the truth and excellence of religion, may be instrumental in confirming the faith of the Christian, and producing some salutary impression on the mind of every reader. Z.

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The rare phenomenon of a total eclipse of the sun happened on the 16th of June, 1806. A more awfully sublime, interesting and impressive phenomenon can hardly be conceived. It seems impossible that an atheist could have witnessed it without deep conviction of the existence of a God. A valued correspondent has favoured us with the following extract from a discourse delivered the Sabbath after this event, which we insert with pleasure.

SERIOUS THOUGHTS EXCITED  
BY THE LATE ECLIPSE.

A *total eclipse* of that luminary, which is not only the source of light and heat to the globe we inhabit, but the life and soul of our system, is an event of such rare occurrence, as well as so grand and sublime in itself, as naturally to command a serious and interested notice. It would be well, if the ideas and feelings, which such events are calculated to excite, might oftener rest on the mind; and especially, if they might become subservient to our moral and religious improvement.

Eclipses, particularly those of the sun, are among the most solemn and impressive specta-

cles, which the world of nature presents. In ages of ignorance and superstition, they have been regarded with surprise and horror. They have been converted into presages of wars and desolations, of public calamities and individual disasters. Nor does it appear strange, either that a gloomy imagination, or that conscious guilt, should have made this use of them. It is not a thing unknown, or unusual, even in our own enlightened age and country, that they have been productive of terror and consternation. Nor indeed, because they are perfectly agreeable to the regular course of nature, and can be demonstrated to result from established laws, does it follow that they claim no special and serious notice. All the *works of the Lord*, as they are great, so they are sought out of those, who have pleasure therein. Nor would it be difficult to shew that these, more particularly, are calculated to lead us into a field of profitable and pious contemplation. As this is my present design, it will not be expected that the subject be handled in a way of philosophical disquisition. Such speculations would, in every view, be unsuitable to the place and occasion.

May it not, however, be properly remarked, in the first place, that the late phenomenon calls our admiring attention to the perfect regularity and harmony, which reign in the natural world? It is true, that many of the less informed consider appearances as preternatural and miraculous. But the fact is, that they take place according to stated and invariable rules; as is evident from this circumstance,

that they can be previously calculated with the greatest certainty and precision. Instead of violating the arrangement established by Heaven, they strongly confirm and display it. They are constant monitors of an ever present, overruling Power, sustaining the world, and preserving unimpaired that perfect order and harmony, which it originally established. Nor have we any reason to confine this sustaining and governing Providence to the system of which our globe makes a part. It cannot rationally be believed that those numberless stars, which occupy the vast expanse of heaven, were made only to dart a few feeble rays of light on our earth. It is much more natural to consider them as suns, surrounded by inhabited planets, and communicating to them the blessings of light and heat. "What an august, what an amazing conception," says one, "does this give us of the works of the Creator! Thousands of thousands of suns, at immense distances from each other, attended by ten thousand times ten thousand worlds, all in rapid motion, yet calm, regular, and harmonious, invariably keeping the paths prescribed them; and these worlds peopled with myriads of intelligent beings, formed for endless progression in perfection and felicity." Rapt into such contemplations, we may well add, in the words of the same writer; "If so much power, wisdom, goodness, and magnificence is displayed in the material creation, which is the least considerable part of the universe, how great, how wise, how good must He be, who



made and governs the whole!"—  
This leads us,

2. To a very mortifying and humbling thought. How deplorable is the inattention and insensibility of man! We are surrounded, on every side, and in every moment of our existence, with numberless demonstrations of the being, the perfections and beneficence of Deity; and yet overlook and neglect them. Such an extraordinary phenomenon as we saw the last week, rouses our attention for a moment, and, as it were, forces a God upon our thoughts. But must the sun be veiled in darkness, to make us feel there is a God? Does not the same sun, rising in cloudless majesty, triumphing in meridian splendor, and setting with a softened effulgence, emphatically proclaim his Maker and ours, and call us to the liveliest sentiments of veneration and love? Is not the whole fabric of nature a stupendous and beautiful temple, in which every rational creature should be found a prostrate worshipper, glowing with every tender, grateful sensibility? Whither can we turn our eyes, and not behold the brightest evidences of the Creator's goodness, and our own numberless obligations? His is the air we breathe, the ground we tread, the food we eat, and the stream that slakes our thirst. In thee, O God, we live; and such is thine overflowing bounty, that

—not content

With every food of life to nourish  
man,  
Thou mak'st all nature beauty to  
his eye,  
And music to his ear!

Where then are the humble,  
grateful returns, which we owe?

Where the love, the devotion, the obedience, which creatures should render to their Creator, and beneficiaries to their infinite Benefactor? Alas! the very profusion of our blessings conceals from our inattentive, stupid minds, the Giver's hand. In the unvaried, uninterrupted tenor of our mercies, we basely find a pretext for thoughtlessness and ingratitude. A great portion of mankind, we have reason to apprehend, would sink into absolute atheism, were they not reminded, in methods awfully intelligible and impressive, that there is a God, who rules above, and who holds the universe in his hands.

3. Should not the late solemn appearance of the heavens call back our minds to contemplate the most solemn and interesting scene ever exhibited on this earth; I mean, the crucifixion of the SAVIOUR, with the darkness, which attended it? That darkness, it is true, was altogether supernatural. As it took place at the time of the Jewish passover, which was celebrated at *full moon*, it could not proceed from a proper eclipse of the sun. Beside, it is well ascertained, that in no solar eclipse, does the total obscurity continue beyond four minutes; whereas, at the crucifixion, the darkness lasted three hours. Whether this darkness were greater, or less, than that which we recently witnessed, cannot be easily determined. But doubtless, some of us were led by what we saw, to revert back to the amazing scene, and assisted to attain a livelier idea of it, than we ever had before. It is proper that we should all thus improve it. O my breth-

ren ! let us this day, in solemn contemplation, pay a visit to Calvary. Let us endeavour by faith to behold a scene, which yonder sun refused to witness. Ah,

Well might the sun in darkness hide,  
And shut his glories in,  
When God, the mighty Maker, dy'd  
For man, the creature's sin.

Doubtless, the darkness, which overspread the sun, was emblematical of that horror, which filled the human soul of the immaculate Jesus. His heavenly Father stood aloof. Not only did earth refuse its pity, but heaven withheld its consolations. This was the bitterest ingredient in his bitter cup. What tongue can describe, or imagination conceive, the sensations of the divine Sufferer, when, during three hours of silent horror, he retired within himself, received in his spotless soul the awful impressions of that wrath, which was due to sin, and at the same time, maintained a conflict with all the principalities and powers of darkness ? Oh, what a *crisis* was that, in human destiny ! How pregnant with salvation and felicity to millions of humble believers, and with aggravated, intolerable perdition to every

stout hearted, impenitent sinner ! O Christians ! meditate often with wonder, love and gratitude, on the suffering Saviour. He drank the cup of trembling, that he might put into your hands the cup of consolation. He vanquished the powers of darkness, that you too might everlastingly triumph over them. Amid the agonies of crucifixion, he endured the hidings of his Father's face, that you might enjoy the beatific smile of his countenance in death, and to all eternity. O ye, who reject the Saviour ! can you hear these things unmoved ? Are they *nothing to you* ? Shall the Son of God expire in agony ; shall the very heavens put on the attire of mourning ; shall yonder luminary avert his face from the awful scene ; shall the earth tremble with amazement, and the solid rocks rend asunder ; and can you still remain unmoved ?—O, at length relent ! Flee from that dire, unheard of wrath, which you cannot sustain ; and rejoice, by your repentance, the heart of that compassionate Saviour, whom you have so long pierced by your sins.

(To be continued.)

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## Selections.

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### FRAGMENTS.

WHILE Israel marched thro' the wilderness, the blackest night had a pillar of fire, and the brightest day a pillar of cloud. So, in this world, things never go so well with God's Israel, but

they have still something to groan under : nor so ill, but they have still some comfort to be thankful for. In the church militant, as in the ark of old, there are both a rod and a pot of manna.

*Dr. Arrowsmith's Chain of Principles.*



If we would well understand the Scriptures, we must bestow pains in comparing one part with another ; for the Lord seems to have arranged them, as they are, purposely, to exercise our diligence, and to distinguish those, who value the knowledge of the truth from such as do not. (Prov. ii. 1—9.)

*Scott's Notes on the Bible,*  
*Num. chap. 22.*

#### ANECDOTE.

THE following communication is from a gentleman, on whose authority the reader may place the most unreserved reliance.

It was my lot, some years ago, occasionally to meet a disciple of the late Dr. Darwin, who had drunk so deeply into the system and spirit of his master, that he considered him the very first poet and philosopher of the age. I have heard him expatiate with enthusiasm on the writings and character of that deist, and, in the same conversation revile the Holy Scriptures, with all the rant of vulgar blasphemy.

Of all the examples of a mind emancipated from religious and moral restraint I ever met with, this unhappy man was the most offensive. His conversation, though abundantly larded with the cant and slang of the new philosophy, was lewd, profane, and conceited ; and when infuriated by zeal for his principles, (which happened as often as they were opposed) every rule of decorum was trampled under foot ; he appeared on such oc-

casions, neither to "fear God, nor to regard man."

A few months after my last interview with him, I was informed that he was no more ! Struck with the event, I was solicitous to know how such a man would die ! The amount of my information was, that, as death approached the confidence he had before expressed in his deistical opinions forsook him, and in its place a deep horror seized his mind ! A short time before his departure, supposing himself quite alone, he was overheard by an unobserved friend, giving vent to the agonies of a tortured conscience. With furious despair he expostulated with the man, (Dr. D.) whom he now reproached as his deceiver ; and, after loading his name with execrations, which I dare not put upon paper, he closed the horrid remonstrance in such terms as the following : "Monster ! wretch ! Is this the end of your boasted philosophy ! Have you brought me to this ?"

Reader ! though such examples are seldom brought forward, you are not hastily to infer that they rarely happen, or that the principles of modern infidelity do not lead to such melancholy issues. The tenderness of survivors may often conceal the dismal story ; and even when such men leave the world with composure, we should remember there are such judgments denounced against obstinate opposers of revelation, as a "seared conscience," and a "reprobate mind !" How different the end of those, who "sleep in Jesus !" M.

*Christian Mag.*

## Review of New Publications.

*The immoral and pernicious tendency of error. Illustrated in a sermon at the ordination of the Rev. James Beach, to the pastoral care of the church in Winsted. Jan. 1. 1806. By ASAHEL HOOKER, A. M. Pastor of the church in Goshen. Hartford, Lincoln & Gleason. Feb. 1806.*

Evil communications corrupt good manners, 1 Cor. xv. 33.

AFTER a very proper introduction, the author gives this as the doctrine of the text. *As gross errors are destructive of good morals, they are necessarily hostile to true religion.* It is a rule laid down by the most approved writers on sermonizing, that the doctrine, or leading sentiment of the discourse be expressed in as few and simple terms as possible. It is, therefore, queried, whether the great sentiment of the text, and of the discourse might not, with more propriety, have been expressed in some such manner as this; *wrong theory is productive of wrong practice; or thus, erroneous sentiments lead to wicked actions.*

The author's plan is to illustrate the doctrine, not by abstract reasoning, but by examining several gross and dangerous errors, which abound at the present day. This method is not without its advantages. The author governs himself by the favourite maxim of a divine, whose memory is highly respected in New England; *that it is one important branch of ministerial*

*faithfulness, to oppose the errors of the times.* Still we are ready to wonder, that the writer contents himself before the great doctrine of the apostle, with only examining a few gross and dangerous errors. It would have contributed much to the merit of the sermon, already excellent, if the ingenious author had undertaken to prove, by some obvious arguments, the connexion between wrong theory and wrong practice. This connexion might have been invincibly argued from the proneness of mankind to do what their judgment approves, or to act according to their conviction. It might have been argued from the vigilance of inspiration to guard us against erroneous sentiments, as well as against wicked actions. It might have been argued too from the conduct of many individuals both in the church, and in the world.

Though we suggest these additions, we do not forget the narrow limits of a single discourse.

The plan adopted is executed with ability. The first error mentioned, as of a pernicious tendency, is *Deism*. The second is the error of the *Universalists*. It is satisfactorily proved, that mankind, as they are, will take occasion from this scheme, if believed, to sin with the greater greediness. This is, in brief, the spirit of his reasoning. If the hearts of men are fully set in them to do evil, because sentence



against them is not speedily executed; how much more will they be set on evil, if they believe the sentence will never be executed.

"The Most High said of the false prophets of old, *they have strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not depart from his wicked way, BY PROMISING HIM LIFE.* Nor is it easy to perceive in what respects the doctrine, which teaches the salvation of all men, of all characters, and which, of course, makes it depend on no conditions, is a whit less immoral and pernicious in its tendency, than the doctrine of the fool's heart, *there is no God.* The father of lies, who was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the truth, doubtless apprehended the real tendency of the doctrine in question, and first preached it to mankind with dire effect. The consequence of their believing it, and acting on a presumption of its being true, was the apostasy and ruin of the human race."

The third false opinion mentioned is, *that the depravity of mankind arises from their ignorance of the truth.* The author shows that this sentiment is contrary to plain scripture declarations, and that it implies that man is by nature holy, and needs not to be renewed by the grace of God; and, accordingly, that the sentiment is suited to cherish his pride and make him pure in his own eyes.

The author finally notices the opinion of those, who deny the divine institution and perpetual obligation of the Christian Sabbath. In a note he suggests, that what has been advanced concerning a few gross errors is equally applicable to others.

A number of interesting reflections close the discourse.

"1. *We may hence see the fatal tendency of modern liberality.* This liberality, when examined by the light of divine truth, is found to be a sort of compromise between the various

friends of error and irreligion. In this compromise it is agreed to extend their full charity to one another, however different their opinions, and even to all mankind, except those, who maintain an essential difference between right and wrong, between truth and error, and who thence contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. As this wonderful liberality is founded in a deep rooted love of darkness, it renders men no less opposed to a candid, impartial, and prayerful investigation of moral and religious subjects, than to that teachable and humble spirit, which is essential to receiving the truth in the love of it. The genius of this liberality is distinguished by such maxims as this; *it is no matter what men believe, if they are but sincere in their belief.* This word, *sincere*, is the bait, which is designed to conceal the deceitful and fatal snare. By being sincere, in the present case, nothing better can be correctly intended, than men's really believing what they profess to believe. But professing, or not professing, can never alter the nature of their belief, or of the things believed. Hence, stripping their language of disguise, this is the doctrine, which they intend to maintain, *that it is no matter what men believe, or what they disbelieve*, and therefore, that they are not accountable to God for any sentiments, which they are pleased to embrace. Some men use this language, who dare not avow themselves the open and unequivocal adversaries of religion, and of morals. But might they not avow this, consistently with truth? And would they not do it, were they not, for the present, less bold, than impious; or more afraid of men, than of God? If it be no matter what men believe, they may believe that the doctrine of an all-perfect Deity, who is the Creator, the Governor, and the Judge of the world, is a mere chimera of superstition. They may, in like manner, disbelieve the record, which God hath given of his Son, or embrace any other opinion, however grossly erroneous, and utterly subversive of the Christian faith. When straitened for arguments to support their liberality in all its absurd and horrid consequences, they will plead their own

cause, by asserting, that they cannot alter their belief, and that, therefore, it cannot be sinful. And with a little more hardihood, but with no more absurdity or impiety, they may proceed to assert the same in respect to any vices, in which they are pleased to indulge. They are not more voluntary in the practice of these vices, than in embracing those sentiments, which are believed for no other reason, than their agreement with the feelings of a proud, sensual, and depraved heart.

"The liberal doctrine of modern times takes for granted what is palpably false, that there is no connexion between men's sentiments and their hearts, and between their hearts and their practice. They never act understandingly, in embracing false and immoral opinions, but from an answerable frame of spirit. It is true, men often become much more depraved and immoral in their lives, in consequence of embracing those sentiments, which justify immorality and irreligion, and which are thence suited to draw forth the latent seeds of sensuality, pride, envy, revenge, and impiety. But in other cases, those, whose crimes have got beforehand of their speculative opinions, are found plunging suddenly into the darkness of gross error, that the hideous deformity of their characters may be concealed from the view of their consciences, and no longer disturb them with the guilty forebodings of infinite wrath.

"Again, that mode of reasoning, which makes all sorts of opinions innocent, might do the same, as consistently, in respect to all sorts of actions. The sentiments, which men embrace on moral and religious subjects, are their rules of moral conduct. Every man, therefore, who justifies errors in opinion, must, if consistent, justify the same, when carried into practice. This agrees not only with the tendency of erroneous sentiments, but with the evident design of numbers in embracing them, and with the habitual conduct of many. They embrace error with the sole view of finding in it a cloak for their sins. Many labour to disbelieve the moral government of God, and even his existence, because they are in love with

practical atheism. They labour to set aside the doctrines, and even the reality of a divine revelation, because they wish to live in such a manner, as fills them with horror, when presented with the awful prospect of being arraigned at the tribunal of Heaven. Accordingly, the doctrine, which maintains the innocence of all opinions, is a most insidious attack on the pure and undefiled religion of the gospel, and being universally admitted, would be soon followed with the universal destruction of the morals and the happiness of mankind in this world, and of their souls in the world to come."

In the second inference the author points out the cause, to which we must ascribe the alarming prevalence of vice and irreligion. He mentions evil communications, or corrupt principles, as having a chief influence.

In the third place he infers, very naturally, the importance not merely of shunning prevalent errors and vices, but of taking the best measures to oppose them, and to counteract their pernicious influence.

"It will perhaps be said, that we live in a land of liberty, where every man enjoys the right of forming and expressing his own opinions. True. But God has invested no man with the right of calling evil good, even if his errors are kept to himself; much less the right of communicating the foul contagion of them to those around him. All men are accountable to God for the sentiments, which they embrace, and which they inculcate on others. Nor have they any more right," on the principles of piety and benevolence, "to disseminate those evil communications, which corrupt good manners, than to practise those flagrant abominations, which are at once an insult to the Majesty of the universe, and an attack on the peace and safety of mankind."

The occasional addresses at the close are marked with perti-



nence, solemnity, and Christian tenderness. On the whole we cannot forbear saying, that this sermon, both in the importance

of the matter, and in the propriety of the manner, far excels the generality of sermons on similar occasions.

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## Religious Intelligence.

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*The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, at their annual sessions in May, are in the practice of receiving accounts of the state of Religion, from the members representing the various parts of their ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and of condensing and publishing these accounts in the form of a Report. The following is their Report for May last.*

THE Assembly have heard with pleasure, accounts from the east and west, the north and south, proclaiming the triumphs of the Redeemer, in the extension and prosperity of his kingdom in our country.

The Assembly have received an impression of the most pleasing kind from the intelligence that there is, in almost every quarter, a general, and in some parts of our church, an increased attention to the public worship of God: that there exists a spirit of inquiry in regard to religious truth, and a more general conviction that the power of godliness is necessary to stamp value on its form.

Associations for prayer and reading the holy Scriptures, have, it appears, been the means frequently blessed by God, to preserve the very existence of religion, in places destitute of the preaching of the gospel, and the full administration of its ordinances. Such associations have happily prepared the people for the labours of the pious missionary, who thus came upon ground, as it were, already broken up, and profitably scattered the good seed of the word.

The Assembly have also heard with great satisfaction, that the catechising of children and others, has, in certain parts of our church, been practised with more than ordinary care, and with that desirable success, which may ever be expected to follow a suitable regard to this most important duty.

With heartfelt pleasure the Assembly bear testimony to the charitable exertions made by some of their churches, for the relief of the poor, and for the maintenance of the holy ministry. They rejoice to find that the ordinances of the gospel are, in general, attended with punctuality and earnestness. They regret, however, that in some particulars, they are compelled to use the language of reprehension. It is with pain they observe it to be the practice of too many, in some of their churches, to attend divine service only on one part of the day, to the neglect or contempt of the remaining part. Against this practice, so injurious to the spiritual interests of their people; so entirely inconsistent with the Christian character and privileges, they think it no more than their duty solemnly to protest. And they do most affectionately beseech all who are conscious of delinquency in this respect, no longer to withhold from God any portion of that time, which he hath specially consecrated to his own service.

We live at a time when it becomes a duty peculiarly incumbent, to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." It will, however, be remembered, that the sacred cause of truth can never be promoted by angry controversy, or railing accusation. It is therefore recommended to the churches, to vindicate the truth, not only by sound and temperate discussion, but also and especially, by the manifestation of its sanctifying and transforming power over the life and conversation; and by evincing, that, "the like mind is in us which was in Christ Jesus our Lord."

It should ever be recollected, that error in doctrine hath a native tendency to produce immorality in practice; and therefore, that we should not be carried about by every wind of doc-

trine. Let us prove all things, and hold fast that which is good. This caution, it is hoped, will be received with attention and solemnity, inasmuch as the church has been of late invaded by errors which strike at the very foundation of our faith and hope, such as the denial of the Godhead, and atonement of the blessed Redeemer, the subjection of holy Scripture to the most extravagant impulses of the heart of man. These and other errors of a dangerous nature, have been industriously, and, alas! that the Assembly should be constrained to add, in some portions of our country, too successfully disseminated.

It is believed that in the revivals of late years, many have been added to the church of such as shall be saved. Many, who, stedfast in the Christian life, seek to adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things. For this, let the Giver of every good, and every perfect gift, be praised. These happy subjects of divine grace are exhorted to "hold fast that, which they have received, that no man take their crown;" to "be faithful unto death, that they may obtain a crown of life."

But as it has often occurred, in former periods of the church, so there is reason to believe, it has happened with respect to these effusions of the Spirit's gracious influences. Transformed into an angel of light, the enemy of souls hath endeavoured to mar the glorious display of divine operations, by inciting to the most absurd and extravagant outrages upon Christian sobriety and decorum.

The Assembly beseech all their people to bear in mind, that if they allow themselves to abandon the unerring guidance of God's written word, they will inevitably become the prey of ignorance, superstition and fanaticism. "Bodily exercise profiteth little." The mind sown with the seed of the word; the soul renewed by the Holy Spirit; these profit; these entitle a man to the character of being truly religious: and whatsoever has not a tendency to cherish and promote true religion, is inconstant as the wind, and light as the chaff it scatters.

The assembly are happy to add, that their observations on the prosperity of the church, and the favourable position of religious affairs generally, were not meant to be confined to the presbyteries under their care: they comprehend also the state of things within the bounds of the General Association of Connecticut, and among the Congregational churches in the state of Vermont, where the interests of Christ's kingdom appear to prosper.

On the whole, they commend their beloved people to the grace of God, praying the great Head of the church to vouchsafe to them yet farther days of refreshing from his presence. Exalted Redeemer, "pour water on the thirsty; floods of water upon the dry ground; thy Spirit on our seed, and thy blessing on our offspring; that they may grow up as grass, and as willows by the water courses." Amen.

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## Literary Intelligence.

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### FOREIGN.

MANGOURIT, the last year, published at Paris, "Travels in Hanover, in the years 1803, 1804." Among other information of value, is the following, viz. That only two religions are known in Hanover, Judaism, and Christianity, which latter is divided into the Catholic, the Calvinist, and the Lutheran persuasions. Before the union of Osnaburgh with the Electorate, the Jews were the most numerous body after the Lutherans. They

have here, as every where else, a commercial disposition. In the great cities they are bankers; in the villages many of them are butchers; their children partake in the advantages of public instruction. There are a few Catholics in Hanover; they were twenty times more numerous, a century ago. They have adopted the religion of the prince. Calvinism is scarcely ever mentioned in Hanover. Lutheranism prevails throughout the



Electorate. The Elector is the chief of this persuasion; in his absence, the second minister, who presides in the Consistory, inspects the other sects. The whole of the ecclesiastical establishment announces the prevalence of toleration. It is true, that the Lutheran ministers receive part of the incomes formerly appropriated to the Catholics, but the destination of the benefactions is not changed, though communicated by different hands. The salaries of these ministers are respectable but moderate; and the clergy, in general, is most favourably and honourably spoken of by this traveller, who commends their attention to study, their manners, their simplicity, and their attachment to their country. The University of Göttingen, and other public literary establishments, are supported partly by the former revenues of certain great benefices, now secularized, and partly by other Romish endowments, now suppressed.

Among the literary productions of Germany, which have lately excited general attention, is a work recently published in Leipzig by Dr. John Charles Woetzel; in which he affirms very positively, that his departed wife has twice appeared to him. The first time, he says, was during the night; the second in open day-light, when he was perfectly awake. He says, she spoke to him in an audible voice. The author brings philosophical arguments in proof of the possibility of such a fact. He published this work at first without his name, but being publicly called on to avow himself, he obeyed, and added "Further Explanations," in a second pamphlet. On a subject like this, opponents were to be expected of course. Among these are enumerated, 1st. Canalich's Thoughts respecting the human soul, its existence and appearance after death. Leipzig. 1805. 2d. Chel-muth's Epistle to Dr. W. relative to his wife's appearing, &c. 3d. Wieland's Euthanasia, three dialogues, on existence after death, &c.

All these authors insist that Dr. W. was partly deceived by others, partly deluded by his own imagination. They adduce arguments from moral and natural philosophy, in opposition to his hypothesis, and, indeed, are led by the impulse of their opposition, to

promulgate principles subversive of truth itself. Wieland even thinks that departed spirits know nothing of their former relations and affections. *In medio tutissimus.* That the departed spirit should associate itself with the affairs of this life would imply a very imperfect separation from its earthly residence. On the other hand, to suppose that it should have no recollection whatever of the "deeds done in the body," amounts to a denial of the retribution justly due to virtue and vice; a sense of which seems to be almost instinctive in the human mind, which the wiser heathen admitted and expected, and which is one of the very foundations of Christianity.

A Military Almanack for 1805, with plates. 12mo. has been published at Berlin.

This work offers, among other articles, a report on the new organization of the Austrian army, and its present state. The following enumeration is founded on correct authorities.

	<i>Men.</i>
Infantry of the line - - -	207,278
Infantry in garrison - - -	6,332
Light Infantry - - -	56,988
Cavalry - - -	34,705
Artillery - - -	14,569

Total 319,872

The author also communicates information on the condition and organization of the Russian army, in its present state. He calculates its amount at 425,000 men: whereas Storch, who appears to have obtained more accurate estimates, gives 493,000, for its true total. This work contains other articles interesting to military men: with plates and a map.

Tyroler Almanack: The Tyrol Almanack, for 1805. Among other information, as well historical as local, this number states the population of the Tyrol, including the bishoprics of Trent and Brixen, at 686,466 inhabitants in the year 1804.

The city of Lindau was ceded to Austria in that year.

*Essay on the Slavonian inhabitants of the Austrian monarchy.* By Joseph Rohrer.

Under the general name of Slaves, or Slavonians, the author includes Morlachians, Croates, Slavonians,

Wendescans, Mazaracians, Gorali-  
ans, Hanacians, Copaniezars, and  
Czechs. Most of these reside in the  
mountainous parts; are of robust  
constitutions, and capable of support-  
ing the fatigues of military duty.  
Their whole number is estimated at

14,115,071. The Slavonians of the  
county of Arve, furnish the most  
portly grenadiers of the Austrian ar-  
my. They have some industry: but  
much remains to be done to render  
their civilization complete.

*Ec. Review.*

## List of New Publications.

**PRECIOUS Truth**; or, some points  
in gospel doctrine vindicated: in a  
series of letters addressed to Chris-  
tians of every denomination. By  
Rev. John Anderson. To which is  
added, "The stone rolled away," a  
sermon. Pittsburgh. Zadok Cramer.

An Inaugural Oration, delivered at  
the Author's Installation, as Boylston  
professor of rhetoric and oratory,  
at Harvard university, in Cambridge,  
Massachusetts. By John Quincy  
Adams. Boston, 1806. Munroe and  
Francis.

A discourse, occasioned by the  
death of Thomas Allen, jun. Esq.  
one of the representatives of the  
town of Pittsfield in the General  
Court of the Commonwealth of Mas-  
sachusetts, who died in Boston,  
March 22, 1806. By Thomas Allen,  
A. M. pastor of the church in Pitts-  
field. 8vo. Pittsfield. P. Allen.

Letters addressed to the editor of  
"a collection of the essays on the  
subject of Episcopacy, which origi-  
nally appeared in the Albany Centi-  
nel, with additional notes and re-  
marks." Albany. Backus and Whit-  
ing.

A sermon delivered on the last  
Thanksgiving, at Washington, Mass.  
By W. G. Ballantine, A. M. Stock-  
bridge.

A discourse on sacred music, de-  
livered before the Essex Musical  
Association at their annual meeting,  
Boxford, September 10, 1804. By  
Leonard Woods, A. M. Salem.  
Joshua Cushing.

A geographical chart of the princi-  
pal states and kingdoms of the known  
world. Amherst, N. H. Joseph  
Cushing.

The secret history of the Court of  
St. Cloud, a new and highly interest-  
ing work. I. Watts, Philadelphia,  
and I. Riley and Co. New York.

A sermon delivered at Hingham,  
Lord's day, May 5, 1805. By Hen-  
ry Ware, A. M. Occasioned by the

dissolution of his pastoral relation to  
the First Church of Christ in Hing-  
ham, and removal to the office of Pro-  
fessor of Divinity in the university at  
Cambridge. Boston. E. Lincoln.

The three first volumes of the life  
and pontificate of Leo the tenth.  
By William Roscoe. 8vo. pp. 1st  
vol. 464; 2d vol. 422; 3d vol. 460.  
Philadelphia. Lorenzo Press of E.  
Bronson.

Letters from Europe, during a  
tour through Switzerland and Italy,  
in the years 1801 and 1802. Written  
by a native of Pennsylvania. In two  
volumes. Philadelphia. A. Bartram  
and T. Dobson. 1805.

A sermon, preached before the  
Massachusetts Missionary Society, at  
their annual meeting in Boston, May  
28, 1805. By Paul Litchfield, A. M.  
Salem. Joshua Cushing.

Sacred and profane history epitom-  
ized; with a continuation of mod-  
ern history to the present time. To  
which is added, an account of the  
feudal system, the crusades, chival-  
ry, the reformation and the revival of  
learning. By Benjamin Tucker.  
Philadelphia. Jacob Johnson.

A new year's sermon, delivered at  
Duxborough, by the pastor of the  
church in that place. 1806.

A syllabus of the history of Eng-  
land; to which is appended, a tour  
through the southern parts of Great  
Britain, designed to aid the pupil in  
acquiring a knowledge of some of  
the principal cities, towns, places,  
manufactories, and natural curiosi-  
ties of England. By Stephen Ad-  
dington, principal of Union academy.  
Philadelphia. D. Hogan.

A sermon preached before the  
Massachusetts Missionary Society at  
their annual meeting in Boston, May  
27, 1806. By Joseph Barker, A. M.  
Salem. H. Pool.

The poems of Ossian, translated  
by James Macpherson, Esq. 2 vols.  
12mo. Price \$2.25. First American



edition. New York. I. and T. Ronals and Evert Duyckinck.

The charges of Jean Baptiste Massillon, Bishop of Clermont, addressed to his clergy: to which are added, two essays, the one part on the art of preaching, and the other on the composition of a sermon. By Rev. Theophilus St. John. 8vo. 1 vol. New York. Brisban and Brannan.

God the Guardian of the poor, and the bank of faith; or, a display of the providences of God, which have at sundry times attended the author. In two parts. By William Huntington. From the 7th London edition. 8vo. pp. 221. Boston. B. Pike.

Williamson's explanation of the Assembly's shorter catechism. Philadelphia. D. Hogan.

Alleine's alarm to unconverted sinners. Printed in the German language. Lancaster. Pennsylvania.

The Mourning Husband. A dis-

course at the funeral of Mrs. Thankful Church, late consort of the Rev. John H. Church, pastor of the church in Pelham, N. H. April 15, 1806. By Leonard Woods. A. M. Newburyport. E. W. Allen, and Thomas and Whipple. 1806.

#### FOREIGN.

Short discourses to be read in families. By William Jay. 2 vols. 8vo. London.

A fourth volume of the sermons of President Davies, from authentic MS. has lately been published in England.

Expository discourses on the book of Genesis, interspersed with practical reflections. By Andrew Fuller. 2 vols. 8vo.

The works of Dr. Isaac Watts, (being the last of the *practical* works) 8vo. with a newly written life of the author prefixed.

### Installation.

ON the 19th of June, the Rev. James P. Wilson was installed pastor of the first Presbyterian Congregation in Philadelphia. The Rev. James Boyd of Newtown presided on

the occasion; the Rev. Doctor William M. Tennent of Abington preached the sermon, and the Rev. Jonathan Freeman of Bridgtown delivered the charge to the minister and people.

### Obituary.

WE are sorry to hear of the death of that celebrated and useful traveller, MUNGO PARK; to whom the civilized world is indebted for much important knowledge of the interior of Africa, and from whom we hoped to have received a valuable addition to his former discoveries. We announced to our readers some time since, that this traveller had entered, the beginning of this year, on a second tour of discoveries into Africa. It appears from the public journals and papers, that in March, 1805, he landed at Goree, whence he proceeded, accompanied by 35 soldiers, under the command of a lieutenant, to Fataatenda, on the river Gambia; whence, after making the necessary arrangements, he proceeded to the nearest point on the river Niger, on the banks of which it was his intention to encamp during the rainy season, and then to explore the course of the river. One man of his party had died before he left Fataatenda, which was

about the middle of April. Accounts since received state, that Mr. Park and his party penetrated about 1500 miles into the interior of Africa, to Sago, a walled city, considered the largest in Africa; where the king, after he had shown them the curiosities of the place, ordered them to be cruelly and brutally murdered. The account of this melancholy affair was brought by some traders, who have arrived at Rio Pongus. It is feared this event, should it prove true, will damp the ardor for making discoveries in this part of the world.

We announce, with regret, the death of the Rev. MATTHIAS BURNET, D. D. of Norwalk, Connecticut, a worthy minister of Jesus Christ.

In this town, on the 20th inst. RICHARD SMITH, a respectable religious character, and a deacon of the Second Baptist Church. He attended public worship on the Sabbath, and died in the evening.

## Poetry.

### THE BUTTERFLY. BY MRS. STEELE.

PRETTY vagrant of the air,  
Emblem of the thoughtless fair :  
Near akin their life and thine,  
Both a fleeting summer shine.  
Short delight your charms impart,  
Charms to catch the human heart :  
Hearts that can be caught with show,  
The virtuoso or the beau.  
Thoughtless nymphs are butterflies,  
Different species, larger size ;  
Strangers both to needful care,  
Fluttering, roving here and there ;  
Basking in the vernal ray,  
Trifling out the summer's day :

Summer's day, from youth to age,  
Trifles all their care engage ;  
But when wintry storms arise,  
Beauty fades, and pleasure dies ;  
Me let nobler cares employ,  
Cares which terminate in joy.  
Ere the summer sunbeams flee,  
Let me, like the frugal bee,  
Well improve the smiling hour,  
Gathering sweets from every flower.  
O may virtue's charms be mine,  
Charms that still increasing shine !  
These will cheer the wintry gloom,  
These will last beyond the tomb.



### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

To give room for the interesting life of Mr. Tennent, we have been obliged to discontinue, for this number, the life of Luther, and to omit several communications prepared for insertion.

We invite the particular attention of our readers to a piece on *Religious Sincerity*, inserted in this number, which is from the pen of a highly respected foreign correspondent.

Z. will accept our thanks for his seasonable, pious, and useful thoughts, excited by the late eclipse. We wish an early communication of the remainder for the next number.

PASTOR'S *Survey of the Churches*, No. 3, shall, if possible, appear in our next number.

We are happy, after so long silence, to hear again from our esteemed and able correspondent, CONSTANS. We hope soon to gratify our readers with his *seventh* Letter to a Brother.

IMPARTIALITY is received. It is our pleasure to gratify our friends and correspondents in all cases consistent with the nature of our work, especially where the honour of American literature is concerned. We readily admit, with our correspondent, that the Review in the Anthology, referred to, and several others in that work, deserve severe censure, as being without correct taste, and indicating not only strong prejudices against the genius and literature of our country, but in other respects a very bad spirit. But as it is our fixed determination to avoid filling our consecrated pages with angry and fruitless controversy on any subjects, our correspondent, we presume, will readily excuse us in declining his request, and in advising him to seek another and more appropriate channel for his communication. The wishes of his friend can be better fulfilled by us in a different way.

We have on our files, reviews of a number of sermons lately preached, and of other recent publications, which shall appear, as fast as the pages in that department of our work will admit them.



### AGENTS FOR THE PANOPLIST.

Messrs. CUSHING & APPLETON, Salem ; THOMAS & WHIPPLE, Newburyport ; W. BUTLER, Northampton ; WHITING & BACKUS, Albany ; GEORGE RICHARDS, Utica ; COLLINS & PERKINS, New York ; W. P. FARRAND, Philadelphia ; ISAAC BEERS & CO. New Haven, O. D. COOK, Hartford ; BENJAMIN CUMMINS, Windsor, Vt. ; JOSEPH CUSHING, Amherst, N. H. ; Mr. DAVIS, Hanover, N. H. ; Rev. ALVAN HYDE, Lee, Me. ; J. KENNEDY, Alexandria.